Self-Compassion, Psychological Resilience, and Social Media Use among Thai and British University Students[*]

Thanyalak Boonlue[**]

Elizabeth Sillence[***]

Abstract

Previous research has suggested that self-compassion and psychological resilience likely positively influence the psychological wellbeing of university students. However, no previous study evaluated the effect of self-compassion and psychological resilience on the wellbeing of Thai and British students. The aims of this study were to explore the factors that affected self-compassion and psychological resilience among Thai and British university students and to explore the role that social media use has on these constructs. A total of 767 university students (482 Thai and 285 British undergraduate students) took part in a questionnaire-based study; and 42 students (21 Thai and 21 British undergraduate students) participated in the in-depth interviews. Our data show that gender, their years of study, as well as social media factors were predictors of self-compassion, while social support and perceived success influenced

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psychological resilience. In addition, our data indicate that Thai and British students encountered similar problems, but applied different strategies to deal with them. There were: 1) using social media to distract themselves from the difficulties in life; 2) using social media to receive social support and advice from their friends; 3) talking with their friends, family or teachers face-to-face; 4) thinking it through when they felt bad; and 5) keeping all the troubles on their minds or ignoring the problems to make them feel better. This study highlights the role that family and friends had on students' strategies to deal with their problems compared to teachers and social media. We discuss the comparison between the two groups in relation to social media and cultural factors, and consider the implications for higher education.

Keywords: self-compassion, psychological resilience, social media use, students, mixed methods

Introduction

Adolescence is a time in which many people experience psychological difficulties. Consequently, undergraduate students often experience a range of social and academic challenges (Swaminathan, Viswanathan, Gnanadurai, Ayyavoo, & Manickam, 2016). Previous studies have suggested that self-compassion and psychological resilience are likely protective factors for young people. Self-compassion has been shown to be beneficial in relation to fundamental happiness, coping, and resilience (Neff, & Seppälä, 2016; Neff, & Knox, 2016). It has also been shown to have positive effects in relation to psychological operating (Neff et al., 2018) and as a way of promoting positive motivation and healthy relationships (Neff, & Seppälä, 2016). Additionally, there is a wealth of literature describing the role of psychological resilience on young people's adjustment and psychological wellbeing. For example, high levels of trait resilience can reduce anxiety symptoms via cognitive and interpersonal

processes (Hou, & Ng, 2014). High levels of resilience also appear to reduce depressive symptoms following painful physical injury (Rainey, Petrey, Reynolds, Agtarap, & Warren, 2014).

Over the past two decades, young people around the world have been influenced by the Internet and social media. Indeed, young adults actively use the Internet via their mobile phones more often than other age groups in the United Kingdom (Office for National Statistics, 2017). A similar pattern can be observed in Thailand. Thai people born between 1981 and 2000 (Generation Y) spend more time online on weekdays (7 hours and 12 minutes) and at weekends (7 hours and 36 minutes) than other generations (ETDA, 2017). A previous study showed that the cultural comparisons of resilience across students have begun to show some interesting differences (Turner, Holdsworth, Scott-Young, & Johnson, 2017). However, there have been no investigations into whether social media use has affected self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students. Likewise, no research has focused on self- compassion, psychological resilience, and social media among Thai and British students despite the longstanding and strong relationship between these two countries. Our own personal teaching experience suggests that some Thai students use social media to vent when they feel down. Additionally, Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber, Loureiro & Solnet (2013) mentioned that there was not enough research investigating the effects of social media use on Generation Y's characteristics such as social identity or psychological and physical wellbeing. They also suggested that previous research highlighted on the phenomenon in a specific country, students' behaviors, and the self-report method of varied age groups but there they did not investigate about the factors and effects of social media use.

Hence, the aims of this study were to: 1) examine the factors that affect self-compassion and psychological resilience; 2) study the relationship between self-compassion and psychological resilience; 3) compare self-

compassion and psychological resilience among Thai and British university students; and 4) explore the role that social media use has on these two constructs. The research questions include: 1) What are the factors affecting self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students? 2) Does social media use have effects on self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students? 3) How can Thai and British students deal with difficulties in life? 4) Do Thai and British students think that social media use can help them to deal with difficulties in life?

Our results highlight the roles of personal factors, social support and educational factors on self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students. These findings advance knowledge about self-compassion, psychological resilience, and social media use in Thai and British university students, and thus should be beneficial to lecturers in these countries. They also provide beneficial information for psychologists to develop programs or trainings to enhance Thai and British students' self-compassion, psychological resilience and appropriate social media use. Furthermore, our results provide fundamental information for educational institutions to design effective learning and teaching policies. Finally, our study should promote better relations and understanding among people in Thailand and the UK.

Literature review

Even though self-compassion was crucial for understanding mental health and resilience (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012), several studies have investigated self-compassion or psychological resilience separately. There are relatively few historical studies in the area of these two constructs.

Self-compassion refers to an ability to hold one's feelings of suffering with a sense of warmth, connection, and concern (Neff & McGehee, 2010). It has also been defined as treating oneself with kindness, recognizing one's shared humanity, and being mindful when considering negative aspects of oneself (Neff & Vonk, 2009). It consists of three main components: (1) Treating

oneself with caring and understanding (Self-kindness); (2) feeling that one's experiences are linked with the others (Common humanity); and (3) balancing one's emotions when negative feelings appear (Mindfulness) (Neff, 2003). Previous studies investigated the factors associated with self-compassion in different contexts, for example, personal characteristics, family, friends and social support. For example, Neff, Pisitsungkagarn, & Hsieh (2008) indicated that they did not investigate the impact of religious beliefs in Thailand on self-compassion as there was not sufficient religious variance in Thailand. Nonetheless, previous studies also indicated that social support had a positive effect on self-compassion (Jeon, Lee, & Kwon, 2016), and that family and cognitive factors were the predictors of self-compassion (Neff & McGehee, 2010). In addition, several studies had shown that family support is associated with self-compassion (Kelly & Dupasquier, 2016; Pepping, Davis, O'Donovan, & Pal, 2015). A recent study also found the relationship between self-compassion and emotional adjustment and coping process (Parrish et al., 2018). Another study demonstrated that self-compassion is related to curiosity and resilience in young people (Bluth, Mullarkey, & Lathren, 2018).

Research into psychological resilience has a long history; its definitions vary can be relatively narrow (e.g., linking resilience to recovery from trauma and adversity (Wang, Liu, & Zhao, 2014; Windle, 2010) or somewhat broader (e.g. linking it to learning and growth (Robertson & Cooper, 2013)). Resilience allows humans to thrive when they had to deal with adversity (Connor & Davidson, 2003). It comprises 5 main factors: 1) personal competence, high standards and tenacity; 2) trust, tolerance and strengthening effects of stress; 3) positive acceptance of change and secure relationships; 4) control; and 5) spiritual influences. Overall, there is a larger body of literature on psychological resilience compared to self-compassion (Hebbani & Srinivasan, 2016; Kassis, Artz, Scambor, Scambor, & Moldenhauer, 2013). It was shown that self-esteem, emotional quotient, family atmosphere, relationships

with friends, and social support were associated with resilience in Thai students (Maliwan Wongkhan, Patcharin Nintachan, & Sopin Sangon, 2015). Furthermore, a recent research indicated that the resilience program can be applied to reduce depressive symptoms in young people (Sriprasarn, Wacharasin, & Hengudomsub, 2018).

Social media is defined as online applications that allow the users to communicate with other people by creating, sharing, or exchanging their information. Since about 2000, researchers have been investigating the effects of social media on psychological wellbeing (Lee & Choi, 2014). Social media can have positive or negative effects on individuals' psychological wellbeing. For example, Facebook use could preserve their relationships with remote family and friends (Dunbar, 2016) and it was related to psychological wellbeing in particular the samples who had low mental resilience (Ziv & Kiassi, 2015). However, studies also suggested that students who spend more time using social networking sites tended to have less time to do health-related activities (Sampasa-Kanyinga & Lewis, 2015), and some participants shared their negative feelings and tried to find some help on social network sites (SNS) (Ophir, 2017).

Overall, several studies have investigated social media, psychological wellbeing, self- compassion and psychological resilience separately, but no research has yet investigated these constructs among Thai and British students regarding the cultural differences. Therefore, it is worth exploring these constructs in the detail.
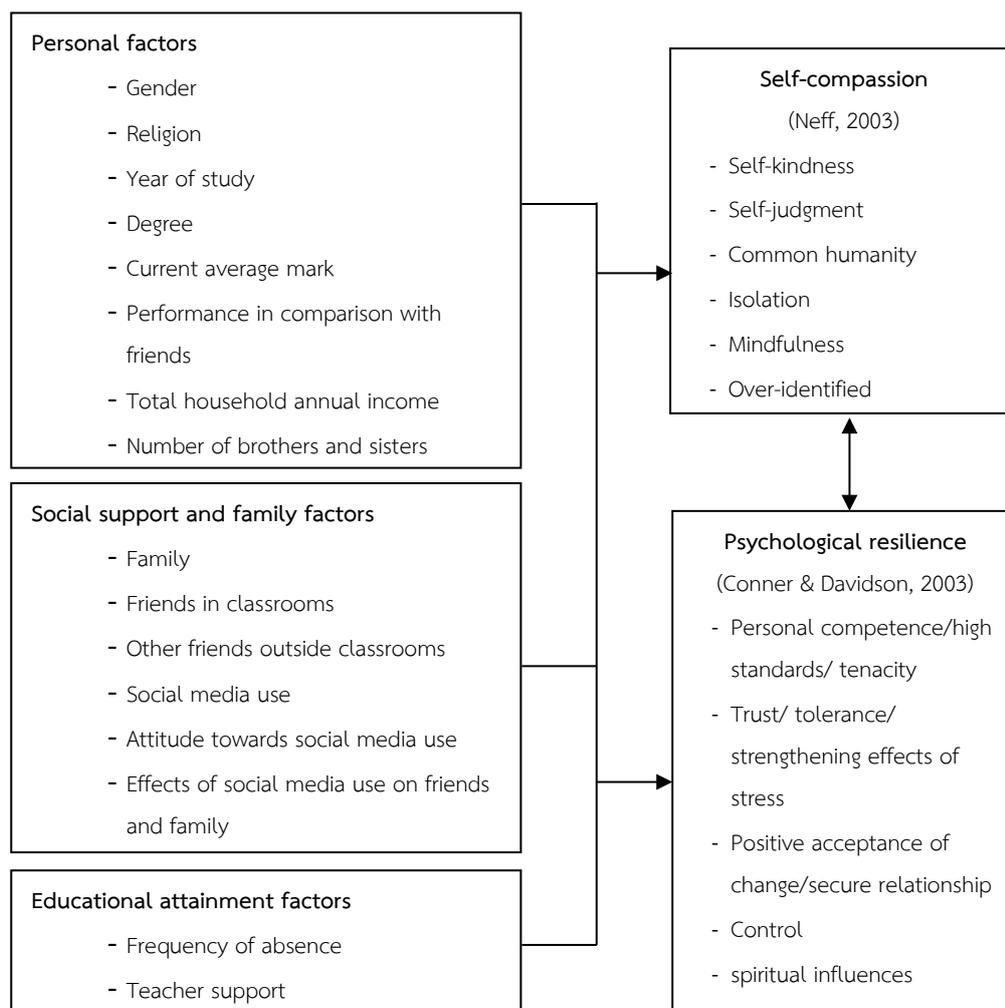
From the overall literature review, the researcher assumed that personal factors, social support and family factors, and educational attainment factors would have effects on self-compassion and psychological resilience of both Thai and British students even though they studied in different cultural contexts.

Methodology

1. Research Framework

In this study, we examine the factors affecting self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students. (See Figure 1 for an overview).

Figure 1 A conceptual framework

Personal factors
- Gender
- Religion
- Year of study
- Degree
- Current average mark
- Performance in comparison with friends
- Total household annual income
- Number of brothers and sisters

Social support and family factors
- Family
- Friends in classrooms
- Other friends outside classrooms
- Social media use
- Attitude towards social media use
- Effects of social media use on friends and family

Educational attainment factors
- Frequency of absence
- Teacher support

Self-compassion
(Neff, 2003)
- Self-kindness
- Self-judgment
- Common humanity
- Isolation
- Mindfulness
- Over-identified

Psychological resilience
(Conner & Davidson, 2003)
- Personal competence/high standards/ tenacity
- Trust/ tolerance/ strengthening effects of stress
- Positive acceptance of change/secure relationship
- Control
- spiritual influences

The questionnaire and the questions for the semi-structured interview had been approved by the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences ethics committee. The questionnaire consisted of 5 parts (personal factors, social support and family factors, educational attainment factors, self-compassion and psychological resilience). The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) which is one of main factors, comprises 26 items that are ranked from almost never (1),

occasionally (2), about half of the time (3), fairly often (4) and almost always (5) (Neff, 2003). The reliability of the SCS measure was 0.81 (Thailand) and 0.76 (UK). In addition, all items in the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) are ranked from not true at all (0), rarely true (1), sometimes true (2), often true (3) and true nearly all the time (4) (Connor & Davidson, 2003) and the reliability of this scale was 0.90 (Thailand) and 0.91 (UK).

3. Data Collection and Participants

3.1 Quantitative data collection

The researcher used stratified random sampling to divide all Thai students into 4 groups according to a number of faculties at RMUTL. We created an online questionnaire and shared the link of this questionnaire with the students in the Department of Psychology (the SONA system) other departments.

Overall, the participants in this study consisted of 484 Thai undergraduate students and 285 British undergraduates. The Thai students were taking general courses in the second semester of 2014 at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (December, 2014 – March, 2015); the British students were all based at Northumbria University (November, 2014 – December, 2015).

3.2 Qualitative data collection

In addition to quantitative data, we also collected qualitative at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (RMUTL) and Northumbria University. 21 Thai and 21 British participants participated in in-depth interviews in December, 2015.

4. Data analysis

We analyzed all data using SPSS v. 22. We applied multiple linear regressions to investigate the factors that affected self-compassion and psychological resilience, correlation analysis to study the relationship between self-compassion and psychological resilience, and a t-test to compare the levels of self-compassion and psychological resilience among British participants. Finally, we applied Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2013), to evaluate whether self-compassion and psychological resilience helped Thai and British students to deal with the difficulties in life.

Results

1. Quantitative results

Table 1 indicates the mean scores for students on the dependent and independent variables. Thai students had higher levels of self-compassion compared to British students (Thai: M =3.30, SD . =33; British: M =3.05, SD = .44; t (767) = -8.54, $p < .01$).

Second, British students demonstrated higher levels of psychological resilience than Thai students (Thai: M =2.68, SD . =49; British: M =3.48, SD = .54; t (767) =20.54, $p < .01$).

Third, the prevalence of social media use among Thai students was higher than British students, and Thai students expressed more positive attitudes toward social media use than British students. In comparison, British students reported larger effects of social media use on friends and family. These findings indicated that Thai students viewed social media use as beneficial for their personal and academic lives, whereas British students perceived that their social media use affected their relationships with friends and family negatively in the sense that they sacrificed time with their friends and family to use social media.

The mean scores, t-values of mean scores and significance values of the dependent and independent variables in Thai and UK students

Variables	N		Mean ($\bar{x}$)		t	p
	Thai	UK	Thai	UK		
Self-compassion	484	285	3.30	3.05	-8.54	< .01
Psychological resilience	484	285	2.68	3.48	20.54	< .01
Current average mark	477	285	2.88	1.58	-13.35	< .01
Performance in comparison with friends	479	285	2.76	3.13	6.00	< .01
Number of brothers and sisters	476	285	1.69	1.62	-1.32	.19
Family support	484	284	5.13	5.57	8.54	< .01
Friends in classrooms support	484	285	5.49	5.12	-4.94	< .01
Other friends outside classrooms support	484	285	5.33	5.62	4.20	< .01
Social media use	484	285	4.50	3.96	-8.26	< .01
Attitudes toward social media use	484	285	5.38	4.05	-19.37	< .01
Effects of social media use on friends and family	484	285	3.83	5.26	13.39	< .01
Frequency of absence	484	285	2.08	2.46	4.24	< .01
Teacher support	484	285	4.64	3.85	-11.80	< .01

1.1 Predictors of self-compassion

Standardized Regression Coefficient, t-Value, and Significance Value for the predictors of self-compassion in Thai students

Predictors	β	t	p
Gender	.12	2.54	< .05

Predictors	β	t	p
Religion	.06	1.28	.20
Year of study	-.02	-.40	.69
Degree	-.10	-2.16	< .05
Current average mark	-.05	-1.13	.26
Performance in comparison with friends	.11	2.43	< .05
Total household annual income	.01	.24	.81
The number of brothers and sisters	-.03	-.66	.51
Family	.15	3.15	< .01
Friends in classrooms	.04	.70	.48
Other friends outside classrooms	.11	2.06	< .05
Social media use	-.03	-.69	.49
Attitude towards social media use	-.01	-.28	.78
Effects of social media use on friends and family	.18	3.90	< .01
Frequency of absence	.08	1.70	.09
Teacher support	.16	2.94	< .01

Table 3 Standardized Regression Coefficient, t-Value, and Significance Value for the predictors of self-compassion in British students
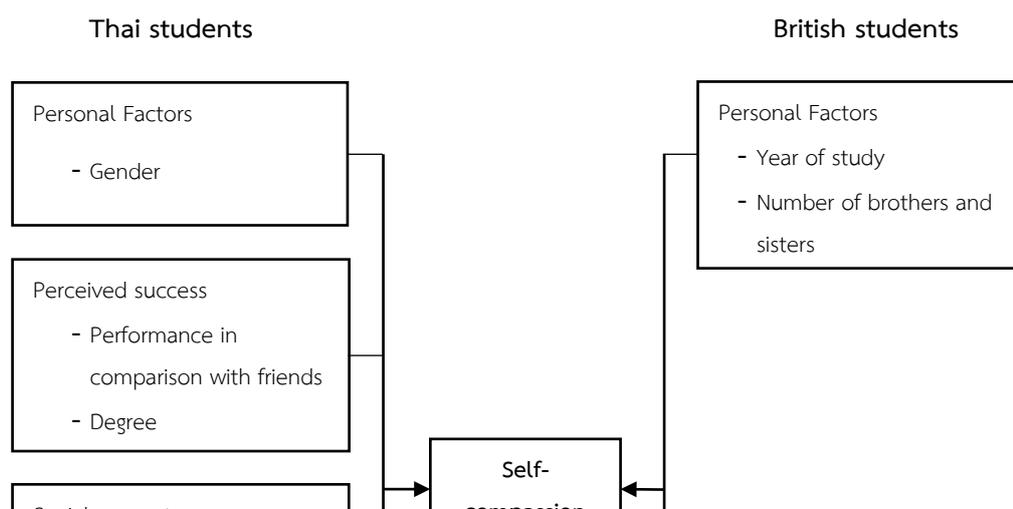
Predictors	β	t	p
Gender	.04	.69	.49
Religion	.01	.19	.85
Year of study	.14	2.10	< .05

Predictors	β	t	p
Degree	-.05	-.82	.41
Current average mark	-.02	-.23	.82
Performance in comparison with friends	-.09	-1.39	.17
Total household annual income	-.07	-1.09	.28
A number of brothers and sisters	-.15	-2.61	< .05
Family	-.06	-.87	.38
Friends in classrooms	-.08	-.94	.35
Other friends outside classrooms	.15	1.72	.09
Social media use	-.00	-.04	.97
Attitude towards social media use	.17	2.37	< .05
Effects of social media use on friends and family	-.08	-1.24	.22
Frequency of absence	.02	.33	.74
Teacher support	-.03	-.47	.64

The results showed that the independent variables could significantly predict 19% of self-compassion in Thai students ($F = 6.60$, $p < .01$) while these variables could significantly predict 12.5% of self-compassion in British students ($F = 2.38$, $p < .01$) (Please see Table 2 and 3).

Figure 2 shows an overview of predictors of self-compassion in Thai and British students.

Figure 2 The predictors of self-compassion in Thai and British students

1.2 Predictors of psychological resilience

Table 4 Standardized Regression Coefficient, t-Value, and Significance Value for the predictors of psychological resilience in Thai students

Predictors	β	t	p
Gender	.08	1.65	.10
Religion	.13	3.01	< .01
Year of study	.12	2.61	< .01
Degree	-.15	-3.19	< .01
Current average mark	-.09	-2.11	< .05
Performance in comparison with friends	.11	2.44	< .05
Total household annual income	.02	.40	.69
A number of brothers and sisters	-.03	-.60	.55
Family	.19	4.00	< .01
Friends in classrooms	.10	1.88	.06

Predictors	β	t	p
Other friends outside classrooms	.06	1.11	.27
Social media use	.07	1.39	.16
Attitude towards social media use	.01	.22	.83
Effects of social media use on friends and family	.14	3.23	< .01
Frequency of absence	.06	1.39	.17
Teacher support	.20	3.88	< .01

Table 5 Standardized Regression Coefficient, t-Value, and Significance Value for the predictors of psychological resilience in British students

Predictors	β	t	p
Gender	.04	.64	.52
Religion	.03	.57	.57
Year of study	.11	1.83	.07
Degree	.07	1.34	.18
Current average mark	.04	.64	.52
Performance in comparison with friends	.26	4.61	< .01
Total household annual income	-.05	-.94	.35
A number of brothers and sisters	.04	.71	.48
Family	.08	1.41	.16
Friends in classrooms	.08	1.00	.32
Other friends outside classrooms	.11	1.31	.19
Social media use	-.05	-.73	.47
Attitude towards social media use	.09	1.37	.17
Effects of social media use on friends and family	.09	1.49	.14
Frequency of absence	.07	1.10	.27
Teacher support	.25	4.11	< .01

Figure 3 The predictors of psychological resilience in Thai and British students

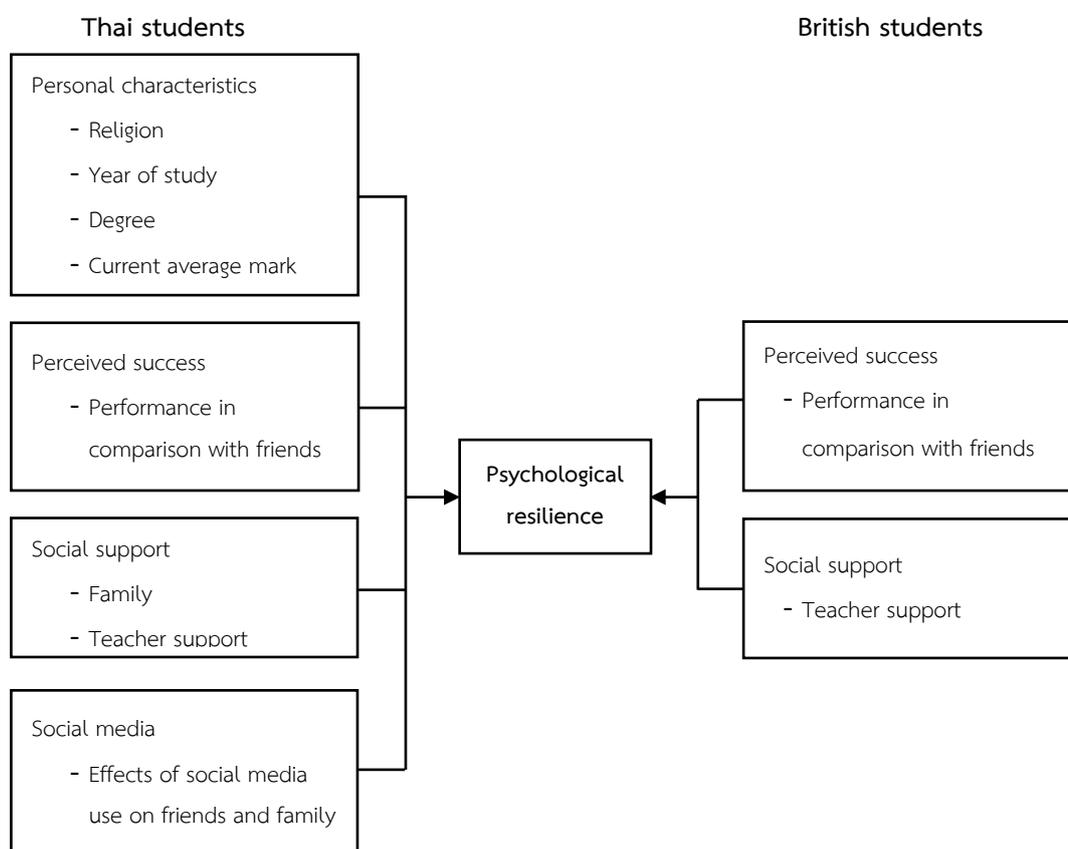Thai students   British students

Figure 3 shows an overview of predictors of psychological resilience in Thai and British students. The results in Table 4 show that these independent variables could significantly predict 26% of the psychological resilience in Thai students (F = 9.86, p < .01), but these variables accounted for 24.5% of psychological resilience among British students (F = 5.42, p < .01) (Please see Table 5).

1.3 The relationship between self-compassion and psychological resilience

Table 6 Correlations between self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai students.

Variables	Self-compassion	Psychological resilience
Self-compassion	1.00	.48**
Psychological resilience	.48**	1.00

**p < .01

Table 7 Correlations between self-compassion and psychological resilience in British students

Variables	Self-compassion	Psychological resilience
Self-compassion	1.00	.10
Psychological resilience	.10	1.00

p > .05

The findings from this study indicated that self-compassion had a positive correlation with psychological resilience in Thai students, *r.* = 48, *p* < .01 (Please see Table 6). However, self-compassion was not significantly associated with psychological resilience in British students, *r.* = 10, *p* . =11 (Please see Table 7). Specifically, those students with high levels of self-compassion were not likely to obtain high scores in psychological resilience.

2. Qualitative results

Our qualitative data indicated that Thai students experienced similar problems to British students, in particular with respect to study problems, relationship problems, and financial problems. Interestingly, a comparison of the two results revealed that Thai and British applied different strategies to deal with the problems in their lives. Some Thai and British participants preferred to use social media to distract themselves from their difficulties.

Moreover, most Thai participants used social media to receive social support and advice from their existing friends while British students used social media to contact other people to overcome their problems. For example, one Thai student revealed that:

'My latest post is 'A man of word not a man of deed is like a garden full of weed.' Then, I wrote that '#Calculus 2, we won't drop it. Keep fighting!' After that, my senior friends commented that it was all right. They had been through it before and this soothed me. They encouraged me.'

The results also showed that British student used social media to contact other people to overcome their problems. For one British student, he talked to his flatmates or used social media to communicate with his family to receive social support when he felt bad. In addition, Thai students communicated with their friends, family, or teachers when they felt down. Similarly, a British student preferred to talk to other people face-to-face about the problems and reported that she felt better or happy quickly after talking face-to-face. Moreover, there were only a small number of Thai and British participants who preferred to think it through when they felt bad. Finally, some Thai participants preferred to keep all troubles on their mind, while some British students tried to ignore or hide the problems to make them feel better. For instance, one student got some sleep if she felt down for the whole day because she believed that she would be fine.

Discussion

The findings from this study indicate an interesting pattern with respect to both the predictors of self-compassion and psychological resilience in students as well as clear differences between British and Thai students. For Thai students, we see a broad range of factors contributing to both psychological resilience and self-compassion. Social support, perceived success, social media, and personal characteristics all contribute to psychological resilience and self-compassion. In British students, the picture is

somewhat different. Here we see social support and perceived success contributing to psychological resilience but positive attitude towards social media use and personal characteristics contributing to self-compassion. The fact that there are two very different sets of predictors for self-compassion and psychological resilience in British students suggests that these two constructs are seen quite differently by students.

Looking more closely, we see that British students reported a greater sense of psychological resilience than Thai students but lower levels of self-compassion. School settings in the UK and indeed elsewhere have often been a focus for resilience training (Ungar, Russell, & Connelly, 2014). Younger children will have exposure to resilience training through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons at school in the UK. The link between academic success and resilience is a driver that may be resulting in higher levels of reported psychological resilience by the undergraduates in our study. Continued research into the benefits of resilience and resilience training in undergraduates is ongoing (Galante et al., 2018).

Overall scores for self-compassion were much lower for British students than for Thai students. This may be underpinned by cultural differences (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Buddhist teachings may help develop this capacity in Thai children from an early age (Christopher, Charoensuk, Gillbert, Neary, & Pearce, 2009). British students may be less comfortable or familiar with the concepts in self-compassion.

Until recently, self-compassion has received far less attention in educational settings in comparison to resilience, although this is beginning to change. Education programs around self-compassion skills have been found to elevate levels of self-compassion in young people, reducing depressive symptoms, increasing positive effects and life satisfaction and dealing with emotional problems (Marsh, Chan, & Macbeth, 2017; Galla, 2016; Bluth, Campo, Futch, & Gaylord, 2016). A recent study by Long and Neff (2018) highlighted the

potential for self-compassion as a way of reducing concerns experienced by students in relation to certain aspects of their academic performance (Long & Neff, 2018).

The role of social media was interesting. The attitude of British students was less positive towards social media, and they used social media less than Thai students. However, British students who felt that their social media use was beneficial were more self-compassionate. This finding adds to the complex literature around social media and the studies that point to both advantages and disadvantages for adolescents of using social media (Best, Manktelow, & Taylor, 2014; McGuire & Downling, 2013; Moreno & Kota, 2014; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009). While much of what is reported about social media and young people is at odds with the notions of kindness and non-judgmental attitudes (Centre for mental health, 2018), it is possible that for students that have a healthy and balanced perspective on their social media use, they are able to draw on the social capital that such interactions bring (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). These findings seem to be consistent with previous studies that demonstrate the psychological benefits of social media use (Donovan et al., 2016; Ophir, 2017). Students may find the social and emotional support they receive via social media useful in encouraging a more self-caring and understanding attitude.

For Thai students, attitudes towards social media were more positive than for their British counterparts. However, increased time on social media at the expense of time with friends and family lead to lower levels of self-compassion and psychological resilience. Increased time on social media, away from offline interactions with family and friends may have left Thai students with less time to reflect and to be kind to themselves.

Undergraduate students are at a vital stage of development, during which they are more vulnerable to experiencing psychological issues (Auerbach et al., 2018). The number of undergraduate students with mental health

problems in the UK continues to rise with recent reports suggesting that 82% of students suffer from stress and anxiety (Macaskill, 2013). Emotional wellbeing is an important factor in predicting engagement in learning and in determining academic outcomes (Geertshuis, 2018). For British students in this study, teacher support was important for increasing psychological resilience. This underlies the importance of university support systems and academic staff contact through, for example, personal tutoring systems. For Thai students with lower levels of psychological resilience, family support remains important. This finding is in line with earlier work that highlighted a connection between the positive relationships with family, friends and teachers and Thai students' psychological resilience (Kassis et al., 2013).

While there are mixed results regarding the impact of social media use on academic performance (Barton, Adams, Browne, & Arrastia-Chisholm, 2018), a sense of connection and a reduced sense of loneliness can be fostered by some forms of social media use (McLaughlin & Sillence, 2018) and there are examples of tutor-led initiatives using social media that have been shown to boost perceived social support during the first semester of University (Deandrea, Ellison, Larose, Steinfield, & Fiore, 2012). Social media usage by academics is often regulated for example, because of cultural inhabitation (Manca & Ranieri, 2016) or concerns around inappropriate use (see for example the problems concerning the social media platform Yik Yak, Archer-Brown & Barnett, 2015). Going forward, the benefits of social media usage for both Thai and British students needs to be explored further and more work needs to be carried out on establishing usable and acceptable social media spaces for staff and students.

Although this study provides a useful comparison between Thai and British students, there were some notable limitations. First, the researcher collected data from Thai students who were studying at Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna (RMUTL) and British students at Northumbria University.

These findings might not generalize to Thai or British students who study in other cities or regions of Thailand and the United Kingdom. Second, the scope of this study was limited in terms of the course differences between Thai and British participants. Finally, a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was not applied in this study for the reason that some independent variables were categorical variables.

Despite these limitations, the study provided preliminary data on the roles of personal factors, social support, educational and social media factors on self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students.

Recommendation

1. Recommendation for practice and policy

1) The findings of this study highlight a definitive need for Thai and British families and teachers to help university students to deal with difficulties in their lives and maintain their mental health by teaching them about life and social skills and giving them the support, advice, and information they need. Additionally, it would be worth developing the programs to enhance the first and the second year students' self-compassion and psychological resilience.

2) The findings in this study can be used for family members and teachers to examine and teach students how to use social media appropriately and creatively.

3) Thai and UK academic institutions and policy makers should consider adding the concepts of self-compassion and psychological resilience in educational activities, course syllabuses, programs and interventions to enhance the students' positive self-perception. For example, mindfulness training and problem-solving skills could be incorporated into a curriculum. Finally, Thai and UK academic institutions and policy makers should realize the effects of social media use on the students and highlight it as a part of the social skills that the students would have to learn during their study.

2. Recommendation for future research

1) Future research is needed to examine other factors that might have effects on self-compassion and psychological resilience in Thai and British students, for example: self-perception, communities and educational institutions.

2) It would be worth developing a standardized social media use scale to measure the prevalence of Internet and social media addiction in Thailand and other countries. In addition, further work needs to be done to establish whether social media use has effects on other constructs in Thailand and the UK, for example, self-efficacy, self-perception and social comparison.

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