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## ARAŞTIRMA

## Açık Erişim

## Five Factor Personality Traits in Self-Compassion, Coping Strategies and Communication Skills

*Öz-anlayış, Başa Çıkma Stratejileri ve İletişim Becerilerinde Beş Faktör Kişilik Özellikleri*

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine whether the sub-dimensions of five personality traits at a significant level predict the sub-dimensions of the variables "Self-compassion", "Coping Strategies" and "Communication." During the 2018-2019 academic year, the sample for the research includes 336 university students. Of the students, 243 are women and 93 are males. The Five-Factor Personality Scale, Self-Compassion Scale, Coping Strategies Scale, and Communication Skills Scale were used as a data collection tool. There was a multivariate regression analysis done. The results of the study showed that the relationship between extraversion and self-compassion is positive and that there is a negative relationship between emotional stability and self-compassion. The study's other finding is that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion use coping mechanisms effectively. The consequences of these findings were discussed in the conclusion.

### Article Information

#### Keywords

Self-compassion  
Coping Strategies  
Communication  
The Five-factor Personality Scale

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

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### ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, Beş Faktör Kişilik Özelliğinin alt boyutlarının, Öz-anlayış, Başa Çıkma Stilleri ve İletişim Değişkenlerinin alt boyutlarını manidar düzeyde yordayıp yordadığının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi'nde 2018-2019 öğretim yılında öğrenim görmekte olan 243'ü kız, 93'ü erkek, toplam 336 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, veri toplama aracı olarak, Beş Faktör Kişilik Ölçeği, Öz-anlayış Ölçeği, Başa Çıkma Stilleri Ölçeği Kısa Formu ve İletişim Becerileri Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Veri analizinde, Çok Değişkenli Regresyon Analizi uygulanmıştır. Yapılan çalışmada, dışa dönüklük ile öz anlayış arasında pozitif yönlü bir ilişki, duygusal denge ile öz anlayış arasında negatif bir ilişki bulunmaktadır bulgusu elde edilmiştir. Elde edilen diğer önemli bir bulgu, öz anlayış düzeyi daha yüksek olan bireylerin, başa çıkma stillerini etkili bir şekilde kullanmalarıdır.

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**Ethical Statement:** The study was carried out within the framework of the Helsinki Declaration and volunteer participants were included in the study.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of self-compassion, which became a focus of interest within the scope of positive psychology studies in recent years, was defined as the openness and sensitivity of an individual towards own suffering, a non-judgmental attitude towards oneself, a kind and compassionate attitude, and the awareness that individual experiences are a part of the common experiences of humanity. According to Neff et al. (2005), individuals, who adopt the self-compassion approach, tend to accept themselves as a whole with their positive and negative aspects, consider that other individuals undergo similar experiences in case of negative conditions, and behave more understanding and compassionate towards themselves. Individuals with self-compassion do not assess circumstances based on the evaluations made by other individuals and ideal standards, accept all the positive and negative characteristics, has the awareness that human nature comprises mistakes and not everything would be perfect, thus, such individuals handle failure in a more balanced way and are less concerned about failures (Neff et al., 2005).

Three sub-dimensions are significant for self-compassion:

- a) Self-kindness: The ability to behave kind towards oneself instead of judging oneself in a self-destructive manner against the individual's own suffering and inadequacies.
- b) Common experiences of humanity: The ability to realize that the encountered negativities could happen to other individuals and could be considered as a part of the common experiences of humanity, instead of feeling oneself isolated from the environment.
- c) Mindfulness: The ability to accept the experienced suffering and inadequacies rather than excessively internalizing them (without identifying, exaggerating or suppressing personality) and the ability to keep their mindfulness in such a balance that allows the individual to develop oneself (Neff, 2003a).

In some studies, conducted in Turkey on self-compassion have been found that self-compassion significantly related with self-sabotage (Yıldırım & Demir, 2017), life satisfaction (Alibekiroğlu, 2018), perceived social support and attachment styles (Bayar & Dost, 2019), relationship status (Baykal et al. 2019), cognitive flexibility and authenticity (Özdemir, 2020) and coping strategies (Sayın, 2017). Besides, some studies on mindfulness, which is a dimension of self-compassion, it has been found that mindfulness is significantly related with psychological well-being (Deniz et al., 2017), emotion regulation (Uygur, 2019), cognitive flexibility (Akman & Demir, 2021), perceived stress (Önder & Utkan, 2018).

The characteristics of individuals with high self compassionate such as productive, not hesitating to do more challenging activities, and being able to cope with the difficulties they encounter more decisively, also in individuals with developed coping strategies. It draws attention as they are the features encountered. Individuals with high self-compassion were also noted for being individuals who use effective coping skills effectively (Allen & Leary, 2010). Individuals are confronted with problems of different feature in many areas of life. Coping skills are very crucial for individuals to interpret these problems they encounter and to solve them successfully and effectively. Coping strategies are a dynamic process that covers individual, cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses that are used to alleviate the sources of events or factors that cause stress or psychological distress and to overcome their negative effects.

The coping strategy to be used draws attention with its structure that differentiates from situation to situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The process of selecting a coping strategy depends on the source

of stress and the individual's ability to cope with this stress. When individuals perceive that the stress source is manageable, they use problem-oriented coping strategies to solve the problem, however, when they perceive that the stress source is unmanageable, they use emotion-oriented coping strategies with an attempt to manage the situation (Carver et al., 1989).

Problem-oriented coping is a relatively active strategy targeting to remove the stress source, if inevitable, reduce its impact. Problem-oriented coping involves identifying effective problem-solving strategies to reduce stress levels, setting specific behavioral goals, and using behaviors that help solve the problem. In tackling stressful situations, problem-oriented coping includes either direct problem solving (brainstorming solutions, action-oriented planning) or concentrating on problem solving. Problem-oriented coping provides beneficial effects on emotions through reducing or adjusting stress sources (Carver, 1997).

The other coping strategy, emotion-oriented coping, is defined as the individual recognition, expression of own feelings, reducing emotional stress when challenging situations are encountered, dealing with emotional stress sources and feeling better (Baker & Berenbaum, 2007). It is used for altering the meaning of the stress sources or for organizing emotional reactions caused by these sources (altering the meaning of the situation and emotional reaction, seeking emotional support, revealing negative feelings to reduce stress (crying), avoiding stressful situations). While problem-oriented coping includes altering or managing the situation, emotion-oriented coping focuses on controlling the negative emotions associated with the stressful situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

In Turkey, some studies with university students have been found that coping strategies are significantly related with self-efficacy and cognitive flexibility (Laçın & Yalçın, 2018), life satisfaction (Karavardar & Korkmaz, 2018), core self-evaluation and resilience (Özer, 2016), perceived stress level (Savcı & Aysan, 2014), causes of stress (Aşçı et al., 2014), resilience, social support and well-being (Malkoç & Yalçın, 2015), adaptation to university, social support, self-interpretation and psychological resilience (Rahat & İlhan, 2016). It is aimed to contribute to the literature by adding variables of self-compassion, five-factor personality traits and communication skills to the studies.

The communication skills, holds an important space in lives of individuals. Throughout their lives, individuals feel the need to establish relationships, to interact and receive support from other individuals (Aydın et al., 2017). The interactions that first started with the mother and father grow over time and continue with different people (Koç & Arslan, 2019). Communication is significantly associated with self-esteem, problem solving, job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, attachment styles (Bugay & Qwen, 2016; Hazar & Yılmaz, 2015), Interpersonal Problem-Solving Skills (Koç et al., 2015).

Communication skills fundamentally include listening, speaking, writing and reading skills, furthermore, an effective communication requires the ability to recognize and understand the messages sent. Communication skills are influenced by the communication processes, which are psychosocial processes that include generating, transferring and interpreting knowledge (Koç et al., 2015). The framework of the conceptual model proposed by Buluş et al. (2015) defines five basic effective communication skills that enable communication multidimensionally: the ego-supportive language, effective listening, self-recognition, self-disclosure, empathy and I-language skills.

- a) Ego-supportive language was defined as a type of expression that positively affects self in interpersonal relations, through this skill the individual becomes capable of realizing necessary developments through drawing attention to his/her positive characteristics and performances in the process of communication.
- b) Effective listening: It could be defined as an active participation to any moment through adequate motivation and attention that allows the comprehension of the message of an individual.
- c) Self-recognition, self-disclosure skills indicate that an individual is self-aware, establishes adequate relationship with own ideas and emotions and recognizes and discloses oneself voluntarily.
- d) Empathy is considered the most fundamental communication skill in an individual that attempts to understand the subjective world of another individual, thus conveying the emotions, ideas and expectations to oneself.
- e) "I-language": It means how an individual is affected by a behavior, the tangible influences are indicated, and the experienced emotion is disclosed (Buluş et al., 2015).

The main purpose of communication is that the messages whose content is determined reach the recipient through appropriate channels and create a desired effect in the receiver. Personality is at the forefront in communication skills, which can be summarized as sensitivity to verbal and non-verbal messages, effective listening and responsiveness.

Personality is a general pattern of a person's ongoing thinking, feeling, behavior, communication and relationship with people. The Big Five theory, developed by McCrae and Costa (1987) is among the most recently developed theories about personality traits, and the number of studies involving five factor personality traits is increasing day by day. The Five Factor Personality Model is defined in five basic dimensions.

- a) Extraversion: Extraverted individuals are energetic, willing, dominant, friendly and talkative, courageous, and ambitious individuals who enjoy being together with other people. O'Brein and De Longis (1996) stated that extraverted individuals use problem-oriented coping strategies under stress conditions
- b) Agreeableness: It includes traits such as being polite, gentle, flexible, reliable, cooperative, forgiving, compassionate and tolerant (Barrick & Mount, 1991).
- c) Conscientiousness: The dimension of conscientiousness includes traits such as carefulness, attentiveness, meticulousness, being responsible, organized, planned, success-oriented (Barrick & Mount, 1991).
- d) Neuroticism (Emotional Stability): Emotionally stable individuals are commonly defined as calm and satisfied with themselves (Friedman & Schustack, 1999). They are compliant, self-confident and tend to experience positive emotions. Neurotic individuals are highly tense, anxious, distressed and sad and experience problems related to their emotional stability (McCrae & John, 1992).
- e) Openness to Experience: It includes interest in knowledge and learning, open-mindedness and artistic sensitivity (Barrick & Mount, 1991). The individuals who are open to development generally appears to be highly imaginative, creative and witty (Todd, 2010).

When the literature is reviewed, it is concluded that there are studies discussing the relationship between five factor personality factors and different variables. For example, The Impact of Five-Factor Personality

Traits on career values in university students (İcerli & Uğuz, 2018), Personality traits of individuals who have children with disabilities (Bal, 2018), The effect of personality characteristics on the psychological resilience levels of bank employees (Cavuşoğlu & Yalcın, 2018), The effect of Five-Factor Personality Traits on loneliness in work-life (Parlak & Sazkaya, 2018).

However, there has not been seen any researches that those variables which are self-compassion, coping strategies and communication skills are studied together to determine. It is thought that the results to be obtained from the study will contribute to self-compassion, coping strategies and big five personality traits literature,

Within the scope of this aim, the research questions of the study are as follows:

- a) Are the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, “Extraversion (EV)”, “Neuroticism (N)”, “Conscientiousness (CT)”, “Agreeableness (AN)”, and “Openness to Experience (OE)” significant predictors of the Self-compassion (SC) variable?
- b) Are the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits significant predictors of the sub-dimensions of coping strategies “positive reinterpretation (PR)”, “mental disengagement (MD)”, “focus on and venting of emotions (FVE)”, “seeking instrumental social support (ISS)”, “denial (DN)”, “turning to religion (TR)”, “humor (HM)”, “behavioral disengagement (BD)”, “restraint coping (RC)”, “seeking emotional social support (ESS)”, “use of drugs/alcohol (UDA)”, “acceptance (ACC)”, “suppression of competing activities (SCA)”, and “planning (PLN)”?
- c) Are the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits significant predictors of the sub-dimensions of communication, “the ego-supportive language (ESL)”, “effective listening (EFL)”, “self-recognition, self-disclosure (SRSD)”, “empathy (EMP)”, and “I-language skills (ILS)”?

## METHOD

### Research Model

This research examines the relationship between several psychological variables; therefore, it employs quantitative research design, namely, the correlational research. Correlational research examines the relationships between two or more variables (Karasar, 2005).

### Participants

The sample group of this research included 336 students who continued their college education in the west region during the 2018-2019 academic year.

**Table 1. Demographic information of participants**

		Number	%
<b>Gender</b>	Woman	243	72
	Men	93	28
<b>Total: 336</b>			
<b>Departments</b>	Psychological Counseling and Guidance	153	46
	Finance	19	5
	Business and Management	5	1
	International Relations	26	8
	Social Studies Teacher	36	11
	Turkish Teaching	59	18
	Elementary School Teaching	38	11
<b>Total: 336</b>			

### Data Collection Tools

This study employed four different scales to measure personality, self-compassion, coping strategies, and communication skills.

**Five-factor Personality Scale.** Five-Factor Personality Scale (FFPS) was developed by Benet-Martinez and John (1998) and adapted to the Turkish by Sumer and Sumer (as cited in Basim et al., 2009) was used to evaluate the personality traits of students. The inventory consists of a total of 44 items. The scale was defined in 5-point Likert-type (1-Strongly Disagree, 5-Fully Agree) The personality sub-dimensions were defined as “Extraversion”, “Neuroticism”, “Conscientiousness”, “Agreeableness”, and “Openness to Experience” and the reliability coefficients were reported to have values between 0.64 and 0.77.

**Self-compassion Scale.** The reliability and validity studies in the Turkish language for the Self-Compassion Scale developed by Neff (2003b) were conducted by Deniz et al. (2008). In the Self-Compassion Scale, the participants are asked to rate the frequency for their responses through a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Never=1”, “Almost Never=2”, “Sometimes=3”, “Almost Always=4” and “Always=5”. The internal consistency coefficient and the test-retest correlations were calculated as .89 and .83, respectively.

**The Coping Strategies Scale (COPE Inventory).** The Coping Strategies Scale (COPE Inventory) was developed by Carver (1997) and was adapted to the Turkish by Bacanlı, Surucu, and İlhan (2013). The items were kept same as the original, with a 4-point Likert-type scale: “1 = I usually don't do this at all”, “2 = I usually do this a little bit”, “3 = I usually do this a fair amount”, “4 = I usually do this a lot”. A short form of the scale consists of 28 items, 2 items per 14 dimensions. These dimensions are; Seeking Instrumental Social Support, Humor, Focus on and Venting of Emotions, Use of Drugs/Alcohol, Acceptance, Suppression of Competing Activities, Turning to Religion, Denial, Behavioral Disengagement, Mental Disengagement, Restraint Coping, Positive Reinterpretation, Seeking Emotional Social Support and Planning. Cronbach internal consistency coefficients of the sub-dimensions were found to be between ,39-,92.

**Communication Skills Scale.** Communication Skills Scale, developed by Buluş et al. (2017), was intended to measure the interpersonal communication skills among adults. It consists of 34 items with a 5- point Likert-type scale. The items 15, 16, 28, 32 and 33 are reversely scored. The reliability and validity studies conducted for this scale indicated that item-total correlations were between .32 and .60. The factor structure of the scale was analyzed by principals-components analysis based on 34 items and 5



factors were found to constitute 51% of the total variance with more than 1 eigenvalue. The internal consistency coefficients were calculated as .72 for the ego-supportive language sub-dimension, .84 for the effective listening sub-dimension, .76 for the self-recognition / self-disclosure sub-dimension, .85 for the empathy sub-dimension, and .836 for the I-language use sub-dimension. Therefore, the scale was structured to be rated based on the sub-dimensions. Accordingly, a higher total score from each subscale means higher levels of using communication skills.

### **Process**

During the data collection process, explanations were made about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the data. Data collection tools were applied to the students who wanted to participate in the research voluntarily. The application took approximately 35 minutes.

### **Data Analysis**

In order to test the assumptions of these analyses and to conduct a multivariate regression analysis, IBM SPSS 20 and LISREL 8.7 software were used. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to the related data groups to confirm the model-data compliance and it was observed that the model-data compliance for the sub-dimensions of both scales was perfectly consistent. Subsequently, the missing data on extreme value analysis was conducted for the regression analysis and the "multivariate normality", "multiple linearities" and the "multiple connection" assumptions were tested.

During the data editing stage, the missing data on extreme value analysis was tested. The missing data on extreme value analysis yielded that no missing data was observed in the present study group. In determining the extreme values Z scores were taken into consideration and the presence of any data outside the limits of +3 and - 3 was controlled. To calculate the multivariate extreme values, the Mahalanobis distances were calculated. No multivariate extreme values were determined within the data of the present study. Univariate and bivariate normality tests were used to test multivariate normality. In the present study, the Kolmogorov Smirnov test was applied for univariate normality. Given the level of significance was lower than .05 as a result of the significance test, normality was not provided. Once the Kolmogorov Smirnov Test does not indicate normality, skewness and kurtosis coefficients should be examined. The skewness coefficient between +1 and -1 indicates that the univariate normality is achieved (Büyüköztürk, 2020). The skewness and kurtosis coefficients of the variables of the present study were obtained and it was observed that these values were within the value ranges (Table 2).

**Table 2. Coefficients of Skewness and Kurtosis**

	Skewness	Kurtosis		Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>PR</b> (Positive Reinterpretation)	0,36	0,09	<b>DN</b> (Denial)	0,30	0,11
<b>BD</b> (Behavioral Disengagement)	0,07	-0,53	<b>ACC</b> (Acceptance)	0,22	-0,05
<b>N/ES</b> (Neuroticism/Emotional Stability)	0,15	-0,01	<b>ESL</b> (The ego-supportive Language)	-0,14	-0,13
<b>MD</b> (Mental Disengagement)	0,36	0,25	<b>TR</b> (Turning to religion)	0,49	-0,42
<b>RC</b> (Restraint Coping)	-0,35	-0,14	<b>SCA</b> (Suppression of competing activities)	-0,16	-0,23
<b>CT</b> (Conscientiousness)	-0,01	-0,35	<b>EFL</b> (Effective Listening)	-0,79	0,4
<b>FVE</b> (Focus on Venting on Emotions)	-0,22	-0,76	<b>HM</b> (Humor)	-0,43	-0,40
<b>ESS</b> (Seeking Emotional Social Support)	0,15	-0,31	<b>PLN</b> (Planning)	0,62	0,27
<b>AN</b> (Agreeableness)	-0,21	0,18	<b>SRSD</b> (Self-recognition, self-disclosure)	-0,13	-0,25
<b>ISS</b> (Seeking Instrumental Social Support)	-0,15	-0,21	<b>SC</b> (Self compassion)	0,03	-0,16
<b>UDA</b> (Use of Drugs/Alcohol)	-0,01	0,14	<b>EMP</b> (Empathy)	-0,45	0,69
<b>OE</b> (Openness to Experience)	0,18	-0,22	<b>EV</b> (Extraversion)	0,08	0,24
			<b>ILS</b> (I-Language Skills)	0,08	-0,35

Power analysis was performed with the Gpower 3.1 program. While performing the analysis, the number of dependent variables and the analysis type were taken into consideration. When the appropriate sample size is calculated with 15% effect size, 5% error amount and 95% power; The suitable sample size was found to be 220. It has been observed that the number of samples considered in the study is sufficient.

## RESULTS

a. The results of the research sub-question, Are the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, "Extraversion", "Neuroticism", "Conscientiousness", "Agreeableness" and "Openness to Experience" significant predictors of the Self-Compassion variable are as follows:

In this sub-question, the predictive powers of the variables "Extraversion", "Neuroticism", "Conscientiousness", "Agreeableness" and "Openness to Experience", which are the sub-dimensions of the personality traits, were evaluated for the Self-Compassion variable. The analysis results were presented in Table 3.



**Table 3. Multivariate regression analysis results for self-compassion,  $\beta$ , t and R<sup>2</sup> values**

Predictor	Outcome	$\beta$	SE	R <sup>2</sup>
EV	SC	.12*	.050	0.24
N/ES		.44*	.050	
CT		.030	.050	
AN		.004	.050	
OE		.072	.050	

\*p<.05

(Extraversion” (EV), “Neuroticism” (N), “Conscientiousness” (CT)  
 “Agreeableness” (AN) and “Openness to Experience” (OE))

As seen in Table 3, while the variables “extraversion” and "neuroticism” significantly predicted the self-compassion variable, the remaining variables, "conscientiousness” “agreeableness” and "openness to experience", did not significantly predict the self-compassion variable. A one-unit change in the extraversion variable leads to a .12-unit increase in self-compassion skills. A one-unit change in the neuroticism variable leads to a .44 unit decrease in the self-compassion skill. Such an outcome could be interpreted as the existence of a positive relationship between Extraversion and self-compassion, whereas there existed a negative relationship between neuroticism and self-compassion. In other words, one-unit change in the extraversion skill of an individual increases the self-compassion skill by .12 units and one-unit change in neuroticism leads to a .44 unit decrease in self-compassion skills. These two variables together explain the 24% of the self-compassion skill (R<sup>2</sup>=.24). The regression equation with significant variables is as follows; SC= 0.12\*EV – 0.44\*N

b. The results of the research sub-question, Are the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, “Extraversion”, “Neuroticism”, “Conscientiousness”, “Agreeableness”, and “Openness to Experience” variables, significant predictors of the sub-dimensions of coping strategies “positive reinterpretation”, “mental disengagement”, "focus on and venting of emotions", "seeking instrumental social support", "denial", "turning to religion", "humor" "behavioral disengagement" "restraint coping", "seeking emotional social support", "use of drugs/alcohol", "acceptance", "suppression of competing activities", and "planning" are as follows:

The results of the multivariate regression analysis conducted for the sub-dimensions of coping strategies "positive reinterpretation", "mental disengagement", "focus on and venting of emotions", "seeking instrumental social support", "denial", "turning to religion” “humor", "behavioral disengagement", "restraint coping", "seeking emotional social support", "use of drugs/alcohol”, "acceptance”, "suppression of competing activities" and "planning" variables were presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Multivariate regression analysis for coping strategies,  $\beta$ , t and R<sup>2</sup> values**

Predictor	Outcome	$\beta$	SE	R <sup>2</sup>	Outcome	$\beta$	SE	R <sup>2</sup>
EV	PR	.01	.06	.025	BD	-.08	.06	.06
N		.15*	.06			.06		
CT		-.02	.06			-.11	.06	
AN		.02	.06			.05	.06	
OE		-.02	.06			.06	.06	
EV	MD	.09	.06	.014	RC	.03	.06	.06
N		-.05	.06			.05	.06	
CT		-.04	.06			.11	.06	
AN		-.06	.06			.09	.06	
OE		.01	.06			.05	.06	
EV	FVE	.18*	.06	.11	ESS	.00	.06	.06
N		.29*	.05			.04	.06	
CT		.05	.06			.087	.06	
AN		.07	.05			.12*	.06	
OE		-.05	.05			.19*	.06	
EV	ISS	.07	.06	.060	UDA	.02	.06	.06
N		.05	.06			.08	.06	
CT		.20*	.06			.03	.06	
AN		-.05	.06			.01	.06	
OE		.07	.06			.14*	.06	
EV	DN	.05	.05	.043	ACC	.047	.06	.06
N		-.07	.06			-.21*	.06	
CT		-.14*	.06			-.08	.06	
AN		-.13*	.06			.01	.06	
OE		.09	.06			.14*	.06	
EV	TR	-.10	.06	.062	SCA	.08	.06	.06
N		-.04	.06			.05	.06	
CT		-.16*	.06			.12*	.06	
AN		-.11	.06			.03	.06	
OE		.014	.06			.059	.06	
EV	HM	.0052	.06	.067	PLN	.10	.06	.06
N		-.0060	.06			-.015	.06	
CT		.14*	.058			-.094	.06	
AN		.14*	.056			-.094	.06	
OE		.087	.056			-.0091	.06	

\*p<.05

As seen in Table 4, each sub-dimension of coping strategies is an outcome variable. For each outcome variable, the predictive power of the predictor variables was separately interpreted, and the regression formulas were presented.

"Mental disengagement", "behavioral disengagement", "restraint coping" and "planning" variables, which are the sub-dimensions of coping strategies, were not significantly predicted by any of the sub-dimensions of the personality traits ( $t < 1.96$ ). The sub-dimensions of the personality traits were not significant predictors of the MD, BD, RC and PLN sub-dimensions.

The significant predictor of the positive reinterpretation (PR) variable was the N variable ( $t > 1.96$ ) and the EV, CT, AN, and OE variables did not significantly predict the PR variable. Such an outcome could be interpreted as a positive reinterpretation, which means a coping strategy was significantly predicted by

emotional balance, one of the personality traits. A one-unit change in the neuroticism (N) of individuals caused a .15-unit increase in their positive reinterpretation (PR) skills. There existed a positive relationship between neuroticism(N) and positive reinterpretation (PR) variables. A positive one-unit change in the neuroticism situation of individuals resulted in .15-unit more positive reinterpretation skill. The neuroticism variable explained only 2% of the positive reinterpretation variable. The regression equation was as follows:  $PR = 0.15 * N$

Once the focus on and venting of emotions (FVE) outcome variable was investigated, it was observed that this variable was significantly predicted by the Extraversion (EV) and the neuroticism (N) variables ( $t > 1.96$ ). Conscientiousness (CT), Agreeableness (AN) and Openness to Experience (OE) were not significant predictors ( $t < 1.96$ ). Once the  $\beta$ -value was interpreted, it was observed that one-unit change caused .18-unit increase in the focus on and venting of emotions (FVE) variable. On the other hand, one-unit change in the neuroticism variable resulted in .29-unit change. Both variables presented a positive relationship with the focus on and venting of emotions variable. It is possible to assert that the individuals, who are more extraverted and have a high level of neuroticism, have a higher strategy of focus on and venting of emotions, with .18 and .29, respectively. Together, these two variables explained only 11% of the focus on and venting of emotions variable ( $R^2 = .11$ ). In other words, other variables, which were not taken into consideration in the present study, could explain the 89% focus on and venting of emotions strategy. The regression equation was as follows:  $FVE = 0.18 * EV + 0.29 * N$

When seeking instrumental social support variable was examined, it was observed that this variable was significantly predicted only by the conscientiousness variable ( $t > 1.96$ ). The  $\beta$ -value indicated that a one-unit change in the CT variable resulted in a .20-unit increase in the ISS variable. Individuals with one-unit higher conscientiousness traits tend to utilize the seeking instrumental social support strategy .20-unit more. The predictor CT variable, alone, explained 6% of the ISS ( $R^2 = .060$ ) and its regression equation could be written as follows:  $ISS = 0.20 * CT$

Once the Denial variable (DN) was investigated, it was observed that conscientiousness (CT) and agreeableness (AN) were the significant predictor variables ( $t > 1.96$ ). The directions of the relationships of these variables with the DN variable indicated a negative relationship for both. Interpreting this finding based on the  $\beta$  coefficient, it was possible to state that one-unit change in CT and AN variable resulted in .14- and .13-unit decrease, respectively, in the DN variable. In other words, individuals with a unit higher conscientiousness and agreeableness skills have lower denial strategies, by .14-unit and .13-unit, respectively. These two variables explained only 4% of the denial strategy ( $R^2 = .043$ ). Such findings could be interpreted as the existence of other variables that explain the denial strategy, but as of yet not included in the study. The regression equation could be written as follows:  $DN = -0.14 * CT - 0.13 * AN$

The significant predictor of the turning to religion (TR) variable was determined as the conscientiousness (CT) variable ( $t > 1.96$ ). One-unit change in the CT variable resulted in a .16-unit decrease in the turning to religion strategy. In this respect, it was possible to state that individuals with one-unit higher conscientiousness trait employ coping strategy, turning to religion, .16-unit less, and this finding could be expressed by the regression equation  $TR = -0.16 * CT$ . Moreover, the CT variable explained 6% of the TR variable ( $R^2 = .062$ ).

The significant predictors for the Humor (HM) variable were determined as the conscientiousness (CT) and agreeableness (AN) variables ( $t > 1.96$ ). Both variables had a positive direction in their relationship with the HM variable and one-unit change in these variables resulted in .14-unit change in a positive

direction in the HM variable. More conscientious and agreeable individuals tend to have more sense of humor, which is one of the coping strategies. These two variables explained almost 7% of the HM variable ( $R^2=.067$ ) and the regression equation for this relationship could be written as follows:  $HM=0.14*CT$

The personality traits that significantly predicted seeking emotional support (ESS) strategy were agreeableness (AN) and openness to experience (OE) ( $t>1.96$ ). A one-unit change in the agreeableness variable resulted in a .12-unit increase in the ESS variable. Openness to experience caused .19-unit increase. These two variables together explained 7% of the ESS strategy ( $R^2=.07$ ). The regression equation is:  $ESS=0.12*AN+0.19*OE$

One of the personality traits, openness to experience (OE) variable significantly predicted the use of drugs/alcohol (UDA) strategy ( $t>1.96$ ). A one-unit change in this variable resulted in a .14-unit increase in the UDA variable. Individuals who are open to experience could exhibit the use of drugs/alcohol strategy for coping. The OE variable explained almost 3% of the use of drugs/alcohol strategy ( $R=.029$ ). The regression equation for this relationship was determined as follows:  $UDA=0.14*OE$

Acceptance (ACC) outcome variable was significantly predicted by the emotional balance (EBN) and openness to experience (OE) variables. While a one-unit change in the ES variable resulted in a .21-unit decrease, one-unit change in the OE variable resulted in a .14-unit increase in the ACC strategy. In other words, individuals who exhibited an emotional balance trait utilized less acceptance strategy for coping, whereas individuals open to experience utilized more acceptance strategy. The regression equation was written as  $ACC=-0.21*ES + 0.14*OE$  and these variables together explained 7% of the ACC variable ( $R^2=.067$ ).

Suppression of competing for activities (SCA) was significantly predicted with the conscientiousness (CT) variable ( $t>1.96$ ). One-unit change in the conscientiousness variable resulted in a .12-unit increase in the SCA strategy. This variable explained 4% of the SCA strategy ( $R^2=.035$ ). The regression equation was written as follows:  $SCA= 0.12*CT$

c. The results of the multivariate regression analysis conducted to determine whether the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, “Extraversion”, “Neuroticism”, “Conscientiousness” “Agreeableness” and “Openness to Experience” variables were significant predictors of the sub-dimensions of communication, “the ego-supportive language”, “effective listening”, “self-recognition, self-disclosure”, “empathy”, and “I-language skills” were presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Multivariate regression analysis for communication strategies,  $\beta$ , t and R<sup>2</sup> values**

Predictor	Outcome	$\beta$	SE	R <sup>2</sup>	Outcome	$\beta$	SE	R <sup>2</sup>
EV	ESL	-.01	.05	.23	EMP	.030	.05	.13
N		-.05	.05			-.033	.05	
CT		.05	.05			.16*	.05	
AN		.36*	.05			.19*	.05	
OE		.22*	.05			.26*	.05	
EV	EFL	.15*	.05	.26	ILS	-.030	.05	.13
N		.017	.05			.12*	.05	
CT		.15*	.05			.22*	.06	
AN		.29*	.05			.22*	.05	
OE		.21*	.05			.081*	.05	
EV	SRSD	.25*	.05	.14				
N		-.16*	.05					
CT		.07	.06					
AN		.06	.05					
OE		.09	.05					

\*p<.05

Table 5 presents the predictive powers of the sub-dimensions of the personality traits on the sub-dimensions of communication, of which the variables are the Ego-Supportive Language, Effective Listening, Self-Recognition, Self-Disclosure, Empathy, and I-Language Skills.

The ego-supportive language variable was predicted by the personality traits, Agreeableness and Openness to Experience ( $t>1.96$ ). One-unit change in the agreeableness variable resulted in .36-unit and one-unit change in openness to experience resulted in .22-unit increase in the ESL. It is possible to state that individuals who exhibit agreeable (.36) and open to experience (.22) personality traits utilize ego-supportive language more. These variables together explained 23% of the ESL variable ( $R^2=.23$ ). Taking the significant predictors into consideration, the regression equation for ESL could be written as follows:  $ESL = 0.36*AN + 0.22*OE$

The effective listening skill was significantly predicted by the extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience ( $t>1.96$ ). It was observed that neuroticism was not a significant predictor for the EFL variable ( $t<1.96$ ). Examining the change of these predictor variables on the outcome variable, it was possible to indicate that a one-unit increase in EV, CT, AN, and OE variables resulted in .15-, .15-, .29- and .21-unit increase, respectively, in EFL skills. Individuals who exhibit in EV, CT, AN, and OE traits have higher EFL skills. Moreover, these variables together explain 23% of the EFL skills ( $R^2=.23$ ). The regression equation was written as:  $EFL = 0.15*EV + 0.15*CT + 0.29*AN + 0.21*OE$

The significant predictors of the Self-Recognition, Self-Disclosure (SRSD) communication skills were extraversion (EV) and neuroticism (N) variables ( $t>1.96$ ). SRSD had a positive relationship with the EV variable and a negative relationship with the N variable. One-unit change in the EV variable resulted in .25-unit increase in the SRSD variable and a one-unit increase in the N variable decreased the SRSD variable with .16-unit. Together, the two variables explained %14 of the SRSD variable and the regression equation was written as follows:  $SRSD = 0.25*EV - 0.16*N$

Empathy (EMP), one of the communication skills, was significantly predicted by the conscientiousness (CT), agreeableness (AN) and openness to experience (OE) variables. A one-unit increase in the CT

variable resulted in .16-unit increase in the EMP variable, and one-unit increase in the AN and OE variables resulted in .19- and .26-unit increase, respectively, in the EMP behavior. The three variables, CT, AN, and OE, together explained 19% of the EMP variable ( $R^2=.19$ ). The regression equation of the relationship was determined as follows:

$$EMP = 0.16*CT + 0.19*AN + 0.26*OE$$

I-Language Skills (ILS) was significantly predicted by the neuroticism (N), conscientiousness (CT) and agreeableness (AN) ( $t>1.96$ ). Predictor variables had a positive relationship with the predicted variable. In other words, an increase in the N, CT and AN variable caused an increase in the ILS variable. The amount of the increase caused by N, CT and AN on ILS are .12-, .22- and .22-unit, respectively. 13% of the ILS variable was explained by the N, CT and AN variable ( $R^2=.13$ ) and the regression equation was written as follows:

$$ILS = 0.12*N + 0.22*CT + 0.22*AN.$$

## DISCUSSION

The present study investigated whether the sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, “Extraversion”, “Neuroticism”, “Conscientiousness”, “Agreeableness” and “Openness to Experience” significantly predicted the sub-dimensions of “Self-Compassion”, “Coping Styles” and “Communication Skills”.

The findings of the present study indicated that there was a positive relationship between extraversion and self-compassion and a negative relationship between emotional stability, and self-compassion. These findings were supported by similar studies in the literature (Neff, 2003b; Leary et al., 2007). For example, Neff (2003b) established the finding that there was a positive relationship between participation, agreeableness, and self-compassion. Moreover, Neff (2003b) concluded that self-compassion was negatively correlated with neuroticism. Individuals with self-compassion were more extraverted and experience less anxiety in their relationship with other individuals. There is a positive relationship between conscientiousness and self-compassion. Emotional stability achieved due to self-compassion results with higher conscientious behavior.

The finding obtained from Neff's (2003b) study, that self-compassion is positively associated with life satisfaction, social relationship, positive affect, extroversion, agreeableness, emotional intelligence, and social relationship supports the finding of the findings of the present study indicated that there was a positive relationship between extraversion and self-compassion. Self-compassionate people draw attention with their higher levels of constructive relationships, emotional intelligence, and coping skills, as well as greater happiness, optimism, life satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation (Neff et.al., 2007). Similarly, according to Crocker and Canevello (2008), self-compassionate individuals are more compassionate in their friendships and more inclined to provide social support.

The findings of the present study indicating a negative relationship between emotional stability (neuroticism) and self-compassion. The findings of the study are supported by the findings of other studies in the literature by Leary et al. (2007). They found that individuals who had higher scores in self-compassion had the tendency to receive lower scores in neuroticism and depression and these individuals were less concerned with negative emotions and more involved with positive reinterpretation when challenging situations were encountered.



The study conducted by Neff et al. (2007) presented that there was a positive relationship between self-compassion and participation, extraversion and conscientiousness and a negative relationship between self-compassion and neuroticism, and these are in line with the findings of the present study. Additionally, the present study established parallels with the study of Adams and Leary (2007), stating that higher levels of self-compassion were related to better psychological health and lower self-compassion resulted in negative psychological outcomes such as neuroticism, depressive symptoms, and anxiety. The individuals who had higher scores in neuroticism due to the presence of negative thoughts and feelings tended to retain such negativity for longer periods. These individuals were determined to be conservative in exhibiting more agreeable behaviors, investing in problem-solving and personal values, and making an effort towards their objectives. Individuals with high neuroticism have problems with strategic response selection and let the negative emotions to be experienced exaggeratedly. The tendency towards negative emotions is the basis of neuroticism (O'Brien & De Longis, 1996). Emotionally stable individuals, when confronted with mixed, uncertain and unanticipated stimuli, set the positive-negative emotions that can cope with this situation into operation, instead of escaping from this situation (Todd, 2010). However, neurotic individuals, there exists a tendency to develop long-term negative emotions and develop several behavioral pathologies. The finding that these individuals have difficulty in maintaining a healthy relationship with other individuals and experience long-term stress (Bruck & Allen, 2003) supports the finding of the present study indicating that individuals with neuroticism utilized the acceptance strategies less. Ekşi (2004) conducted a study with university students and concluded that there were moderate and significant relationships between the situational responses, coping strategies, and dealing with neuroticism and optimistic responses of the Five-Factor Personality Traits. This also supports the finding of the present study that individuals with neuroticism utilized the acceptance strategies less. It is noteworthy that individuals who effectively solve their problems have better psychological and physical health and professional success (Heppner et al, 2004). Effective problem-solving skills are key coping mechanisms in reducing the negative impacts of emotional stress, as well as eliminating the impairment effect of personal and interpersonal problems (Tetik & Açıkgöz, 2013).

Another remarkable finding of the present study is that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion use coping strategies more effectively. This finding is consistent with the finding of Neff et al. (2007), stating that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion, self-expression and who take hold and control the situation, utilized coping strategies more effectively when a source of stress was encountered.

Self-compassion and positive reinterpretation, stemmed from the work of Allen and Leary (2010), have a positive relationship and self-compassionate individuals utilize problem-solving and coping strategies and this finding also supports the findings of the present study. This study is also in line with the findings of Sirois et al. (2015), stating that self-compassion was positively related to the problem solving oriented coping strategies. Similarly, in a study conducted by Park (2014) with 232 university students, it was concluded that students with higher self-compassion utilized problem solving oriented coping mechanisms more effectively

Self compassion covers mindfulness, which refers to a balanced and non-judgmental response to negative emotions, as opposed to get rid of them or becoming overwhelmed by them (Lathren et al., 2021).

Findings from the study of Uygur (2019) stated, while mindfulness, a sub-dimension of self-compassion, shows a negative and significant relationship with negative coping and avoidant coping; The finding that it has a positive and significant relationship with active coping is similar to another remarkable finding of

the present study is that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion use coping strategies more effectively. In a similar study, Weistein et al. (2009) concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between active coping style and mindfulness. Because for individuals using active coping style, stressful situations are seen as manageable situations. Instead of making sudden and impulsive decisions, it is noteworthy that they make more logical and accurate decisions and act. According to Halland et al. (2015), active coping ability can facilitate the mindfulness skill by providing the individual's attention to the "moment" and awareness of positive or negative emotions. Weistein et al. (2009) and Bergomi et al. (2012) revealed that there is a negative and significant relationship between mindfulness and avoidant coping style.

The findings of the present study is that individuals with higher levels of self-compassion use coping strategies more effectively are in line with the findings of the literature (Lathren et al., 2021; Costa & Pinto-Gouveia, 2013). Self-compassion is related with adaptive responses to challenging interpersonal states, increase in relationship quality, be balanced in concern for self and others and high perceived supportiveness of others (Lathren et al., 2021). Costa and Pinto-Gouveia (2013) concluded positive relations of self-compassion with adaptive coping strategies and negative relations with maladaptive coping strategies. The use of an active coping strategy, which includes defining the problem, thinking about the solution options, applying and evaluating them, brings highly effective and functional results for the individual (Dolenc, 2015)

Breines and Chen (2013) reported that self-compassion increased healthy coping behaviors and personal development, thus provided protection against negative emotions and facilitated subjective well-being. Barnard and Curry (2011) examined several studies, and found that self-compassion was positively associated with well-being and happiness, and negatively associated with negative emotions, depression, and anxiety. Similarly, the study conducted with university students by Deniz and Sumer (2010) indicated that depression, anxiety and stress levels of university students with low self-compassion levels were significantly higher compared to students with moderate and high self-compassion levels. In his study, Gilbert (1989, 2005) concluded that self-compassion had a structure that had significant positive relationships with psychological health. Self-compassion was negatively associated with self-criticism, depression, anxiety, rumination, suppression, and neurotic perfectionism, and was positively associated with satisfaction of life, social commitment, and emotional intelligence.

In this study, the findings stated that individuals who had high scores from the Five-Factor Personality Traits, agreeableness, and openness to experience, used ego-supportive language more effectively. The sub-dimensions Five Factor Personality Traits of conscientiousness (CT), agreeableness (AN) and openness to experience (OE) significantly predicted Empathy (EMP), which is one of the sub-dimensions of communication skills.

Individuals who exhibited extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience had more effective communication skills. Our findings in this study are highly similar to the findings of Bugay and Owen (2016), stating that extraversion strongly predicted the communication skills in adolescents. Considering extraversion as a predisposition to social harmony, friendship and new environments, it is reasonable that it significantly predicts communication skills. The findings of Ashton et al. (2002) suggested that extraverts had good interpersonal relations, and such an assertion supports the findings of this study. Phipps & Prieto (2011) concluded that extraverts were more open to initiating and maintaining relationships with other individuals, and were more successful in interpersonal

relationships. This study illustrates that individual with higher levels of extraversion and emotional stability, sub-dimensions of the Five-Factor Personality Traits, had the strategy, focusing on and venting of emotions. Accordingly, Extraversion (EV) and Emotional Stability (Neuroticism) sub-dimensions were the predictors of Self-Recognition, Self-Disclosure (SRSD) ( $t > 1.9$ ). The self-recognition, self-disclosure communication skill was positively associated with extraversion dimension and negatively associated with the neuroticism dimension. One-unit change in extroversion dimension increased the self-recognition, self-disclosure skill by .25-unit, one-unit change in neuroticism decreased the self-recognition, self-disclosure skill by .16-unit. This finding was similar to the finding of Yiğit and Deniz (2012), stating that there was a significant relationship between the five-factor personality traits and communication skills, negative relationship between neuroticism and communication skills. Positive and significant relationships were found between extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

### **Suggestions**

This research contributes to the field where a positive relationship between the relationship between five-factor personality traits, self-compassion, coping strategies and effective communication skills has been established. It can be suggested that programs with long-term, positive and productive effects should be implemented both individually and as group studies. Within the scope of these studies, activities of personal-social counseling facilitate (social problem-solving, effective communication skills, assertiveness training, etc.) can be included in that programs. From this point of view, the preparation and implementation of self-compassion enhancing programs for students to whom low coping skills and communication skills scarcity will bring long-term positive and productive results.

University counseling centers might present psycho-educational programs to students in order to increase their self compassion, communication skills or coping strategies. For example, students can be taught effective coping strategies, communication skills (students can obtain interpersonal relationship skills to enhance relationships with families, friends, and significant others). Individuals who face many emotional, physiological and psychological problems may not be at a sufficient level to use coping strategies effectively. Social support from friends, field experts or family is very important in dealing with the problems experienced effectively. Inclusion of other important figures (family, friend, etc.) in the intervention studies is important.

### **Limitations**

This study contains some limitations on the characteristics of the study group. Limitations should be considered while generalizing the results. This study is limited to a sample of public university in Aydın. Working with students from public and private universities in different cities can be enriched. It is thought that the larger the size of the sample and its repetition on larger samples will be beneficial. In addition, experimental research can be designed to determine the effects of psychoeducational programs that increase self-compassion, communication skills and coping strategies on individuals.

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It has been reported by the author that there is no conflict of interest.

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