



## THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-COMPASSION, AND GENDER IN PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

PSİKOLOJİK SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİKTE ÖZGÜVEN, ÖZ ŞEFKAT VE CİNSİYETİN ROLÜ

Ferzan CURUN<sup>1</sup>

Defne GÖKALP<sup>2</sup>

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Geliş Tarihi / Date Applied 24.07.2025	Kabul Tarihi / Date Accepted 03.09.2025
<p><b>ÖZET</b></p> <p>Geleneksel olarak sürdürülebilirlik bilimi, öncelikli olarak teknik ve ekolojik boyutlara odaklanmıştır. Ancak psikolojik sürdürülebilirlik kavramının gelişimi, bu çerçeveyi genişleterek bireysel, toplumsal, örgütsel ve küresel düzeylerde iyi oluşun bütüncül bir perspektifle ele alınmasına olanak sağlamıştır. Bu yaklaşım, yalnızca zorluklarla başa çıkma kapasitesine değil, aynı zamanda uzun vadede iyi oluşun sürdürülmesini destekleyen istikrarlı psikolojik kaynakların geliştirilmesine vurgu yapmaktadır. Böylece psikolojik sürdürülebilirlik, insanların dayanıklılıklarını artıran ve iyi oluşlarını iyileştiren çok yönlü bir kavramsal çerçeve olarak önem kazanmıştır.</p> <p>Bu çalışmada, psikolojik sürdürülebilirliğin anlaşılmasına katkı sağlayabilecek kişi içi ve kişilerarası değişkenler, ilgili alan yazın temelinde kapsamlı bir şekilde derlenmiştir. Özellikle dayanıklılık ve iyi oluş üzerinde önemli yordayıcılar olarak gösterilen özsaygı ve öz-şefkat ile kişilerarası ilişkileri şekillendirmedeki rolü nedeniyle toplumsal cinsiyet değişkeni ele alınmıştır. Bu derleme, gelecekteki ampirik araştırmalar için bir model önerisi sunmayı ve müdahale programlarına yönelik stratejiler geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Kavramların kültürel bağlamla etkileşimi dikkate alınarak, bu değişkenlerin psikolojik sürdürülebilirlikle ilgili olası etkileri detaylı biçimde aktarılmıştır. Ulusal ve uluslararası çalışmalar ışığında değişkenler değerlendirilmiş; tartışma, sınırlılıklar, geleceğe yönelik öneriler ve araştırmanın çıktıları sunulmuştur.</p> <p><b>Anahtar Kelimeler:</b> Kültürel Bağlam Benlik Saygısı, Öz-Şefkat, Psikolojik Sürdürülebilirlik, Toplumsal Cinsiyet.</p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT</b></p> <p>Traditionally, sustainability science has emphasized technical and ecological dimensions. However, the emergence of psychological sustainability has broadened this framework to include well-being at individual, societal, organizational, and global levels. This perspective highlights not only the ability to cope with adversity but also the cultivation of stable psychological resources that support long-term well-being. As a result, psychological sustainability has gained prominence as a multidimensional framework that strengthens resilience and enhances quality of life.</p> <p>This study reviews intrapersonal and interpersonal variables that contribute to the understanding of psychological sustainability, drawing on relevant literature. Specifically, it examines self-esteem and self-compassion -recognized as key predictors of resilience and well-being- as well as gender, given its influence on interpersonal dynamics. The review seeks to propose a model for future empirical research and to inform strategies for intervention programs. By considering these constructs within their cultural context, the study explores their potential effects on psychological sustainability. The variables are discussed with reference to both national and international studies, and the review concludes with limitations, recommendations for future research, and practical implications.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Cultural Context, Self-Esteem, Self-Compassion, Psychological Sustainability, Gender.</p>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Psychological sustainability refers to an individual's capacity to maintain long-term well-being despite internal and external challenges and is a relatively novel concept in the literature (Di Fabio & Tsuda, 2018; Di Fabio, 2021). This concept extends the notion of sustainability beyond environmental and economic domains by focusing on the continuity of psychological resources. Accordingly, the quality of intrapersonal and interpersonal psychological resources plays a crucial role in understanding psychological sustainability

In the literature, self-esteem and self-compassion have emerged as foundational intrapersonal variables underpinning resilience and well-being, and thus are considered key factors in psychological sustainability. These constructs serve as significant psychological resources that support individuals' endurance and sustained well-being. This study examines these intrapersonal variables alongside gender, an interpersonal and socially constructed factor.

In this study, gender is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing personality traits, gender stereotypes, and sexism, and its impact on psychological sustainability is examined as a structure influencing interpersonal relationships.

The variables addressed in this review are inherently shaped by cultural contexts and cannot be considered independent of culture. As elaborated in later sections, Turkish culture is characterized as being closer to collectivism. In collectivist cultures such as self-construals and gender roles are formed differently than in individualistic contexts. Self-esteem is strongly influenced by social approval and relational validation, while self-compassion is frequently intertwined with sacrifice and selflessness. Gender constitutes a fundamental structure shaping individuals' roles, behaviors, and utilization of psychological resources in this cultural context. In this context, the influence of cultural perspectives is incorporated into the discussion and analysis of the concepts.

Grounded in a comprehensive literature review, the study first addresses the role of internal psychological resources- particularly self-esteem and self-compassion- in fostering psychological sustainability. It then examines gender as a multidimensional construct and analyzes its influence on interpersonal dynamics and well-being, particularly in the context of sustainability outcomes.

By synthesizing findings from these domains, the present work proposes a holistic framework that elucidates the interplay between intrapersonal and relational variables in supporting psychological sustainability. The proposed model is intended to serve as a foundation for future empirical research and guide the development of culturally sensitive intervention programs.

Accordingly, the article is structured as follows: it begins with the theoretical background of the key variables and their relationship with psychological sustainability. Secondly Turkish culture is elaborated on. Then it is followed by examples of potential intervention strategies. Finally, discussion, implications and limitations and future directions are presented.

## **2. PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

As mentioned earlier, psychological sustainability is a relatively new concept in psychology, referring to an individual's capacity to maintain resilience and long-term well-being in the face of internal and external challenges (Di Fabio & Tsuda, 2018; Di Fabio, 2021). It encompasses not only coping with stress and adversity but also the development of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal resources that support meaningful life connections and sustainable development

goals. Therefore, psychological sustainability should be understood as a multidimensional construct that sustains resilience and wellbeing over time.

Although research on psychological sustainability is limited, several studies emphasize the importance of personal and social resources in this context. For instance, Di Fabio and Tsuda (2018) highlight harmonization as central to psychological sustainability, emphasizing balanced relationships with oneself, others, and the natural world. Additionally, Kazankov (2021)

not only by economic and technological factors but also by individuals' cognitive, emotional, and social processes (Corral-Verdugo et al., 2013). Emotional processes, in particular, play a critical role beyond cognitive engagement in proposes a multidimensional model with psychophysiological, psychological, and psychosocial layers, illustrating the dynamic and multifaceted nature of psychological sustainability

Sustainable development is increasingly recognized as shaped motivating sustainable behavior, as Brosch and Steg (2021) argue. At the organizational level, proactive interventions that foster employees' internal resources enhance meaning, belonging, and resilience in the workplace (Di Fabio, 2017)

Hubscher-Davidson (2020) defines psychological sustainability as individuals' capacity to optimize and regenerate personal resources to maintain long-term well-being amid challenges. Components of psychological capital, such as hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience, are crucial in this process. These positive resources are especially vital in adapting to today's uncertain and rapidly changing work environments.

Di Fabio et al. (2018) found that emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between personality traits and both hope and optimism among Italian workers. Emotional intelligence strengthens the impact of emotional stability, agreeableness, and extraversion on these positive resources. Such findings underscore the central role of emotional intelligence in enhancing personal resources and contribute to the literature on psychological sustainability and sustainable development.

Similarly, Di Fabio and Saklofske (2019) demonstrated that emotional intelligence significantly explains positive relational management beyond personality traits. This highlights emotional intelligence's key role in developing and maintaining relational factors essential to psychological sustainability. Together, these studies suggest that both intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional competencies are foundational for sustainable individual and organizational well-being.

In summary, long-term well-being within psychological sustainability depends on internal resources (e.g., hope, self-efficacy, resilience) and external supports (e.g., positive relationships, social support, organizational climate) (Hubscher-Davidson, 2020). These factors enhance individuals' capacity to cope with adversity and maintain life satisfaction over time.

Psychological sustainability is an interdisciplinary construct integrating resilience, self-awareness, and well-being. It operates across both individual and collective contexts. As the field continues to evolve, investigating its interaction with cultural and social variables presents promising opportunities for research.

### **2.1. Self-Esteem and Psychological Sustainability**

Self-esteem refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their self-worth—that is, the thoughts and feelings one holds about oneself (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger & Vohs, 2003; Hewitt, 2009). The more positive these evaluations, the higher the level of self-esteem.

Many studies emphasize the benefits of high self-esteem, noting its associations with improved social relationships, professional success, and psychological well-being (Orth & Robins 2014). In contrast, low self-esteem is consistently linked to maladjustment, depression, and reduced life satisfaction. Importantly, self-esteem is regarded not merely as a consequence but also as a predictor of life success. Individuals with low self-esteem are typically more vulnerable to both social and psychological difficulties.

Heimpel, Wood, Marshall, and Brown (2002) found that individuals with low self-esteem were less motivated to improve their moods after failure, and less likely to engage in activities aimed at boosting positive emotions compared to those with high self-esteem. These findings underscore the role of self-esteem in fostering emotional resilience.

On another note, Hu et al. (2023) draw attention to the downstream effects of low self-esteem on interpersonal behavior. Their study of Chinese adolescents revealed that low self-esteem was linked to increased aggression through the mediating roles of jealousy and poor self-control. These findings emphasize the relational and behavioral consequences of low self-worth, suggesting that enhancing self-esteem not only improves intrapersonal resilience but also supports healthier social functioning—both of which are essential for sustainable psychological development.

Supporting this, Guo et al. (2022) found in a cross-sectional study of Chinese medical students that low self-esteem was significantly associated with heightened psychological distress, including symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress. The authors concluded that self-esteem acts as a protective psychological resource and recommended that interventions aimed at enhancing self-esteem could improve young adults' mental health outcomes and sustainability.

A growing body of literature examines the interconnection between self-esteem and resilience—the ability to adapt and recover in the face of adversity. For instance, Veselska et al. (2009) found that low self-esteem predicted risky behaviors such as smoking and cannabis use among adolescent boys but not girls, suggesting gender differences in how resilience moderates this relationship.

Puia, Rusu, and Macavei (2025) conducted an item-level analysis of the positive cognitive triad—positive views of the self, the world, and the future—in the relationship between resilience and well-being. Their results showed that positive self-views (closely related to self-esteem) were the most influential component in strengthening the resilience–well-being link. This suggests that interventions seeking to boost resilience's effect on well-being may benefit most from targeting self-esteem specifically, as it appears to operate as the central cognitive driver within the triad. The study enriches the theoretical connection between cognitive patterns and sustainable psychological resources, positioning self-esteem as a crucial pivot point between resilience and broader life satisfaction.

Supervía, Bordás, and Lorente (2022) examined the mediating role of self-esteem in the relationship between resilience and life satisfaction among adolescent students. Their findings revealed that resilience positively predicted self-esteem, which in turn predicted greater life

satisfaction, indicating a partial mediation effect. This suggests that resilience alone is not always sufficient to enhance adolescents' subjective well-being; rather, resilience fosters self-esteem, which then serves as the more immediate psychological driver of life satisfaction. The study's adolescent sample is particularly relevant for early intervention strategies, as it underscores the importance of building both resilience and self-esteem simultaneously during formative developmental stages to sustain long-term psychological well-being.

Also, Henriksen et al. (2017) further demonstrated this link through a three-year longitudinal study of adolescents in clinical treatment. They found that higher self-esteem at baseline predicted fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety three years later, even after accounting for initial symptom severity and treatment effects.

Adding to these insights, Qi et al. (2024) examined children and adolescents with hearing impairment and found that resilience positively influenced self-esteem through the mediating effect of positive coping strategies. This finding is significant because it identifies coping strategies as a modifiable behavioural factor that can enhance self-worth in vulnerable populations facing both social and functional challenges. By highlighting the interplay between resilience, coping, and self-esteem, the study underscores the importance of targeted interventions that not only develop adaptive coping but also address the self-evaluations of individuals with disabilities to strengthen psychological sustainability. These suggests that self-esteem functions as a critical long-term protective factor in adolescent psychological sustainability.

Similarly, Kiyıloğlu (2024) found that among Turkish university students, self-esteem positively predicted both resilience and life satisfaction, with resilience and life satisfaction partially mediating the relationship between self-esteem and certain risk-taking behaviours. This highlights the dual role of self-esteem as both a direct contributor to well-being and an indirect facilitator through resilience and life satisfaction.

Focusing on the more serious aspects, in a large cross-sectional survey of Vietnamese high school students, Nguyen, Wright, Dedding, Pham, and Bunders (2019) found that low self-esteem was significantly associated with anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Adolescents with lower self-worth were 2–3 times more likely to report psychological distress, and they also reported lower life satisfaction.

Doğrusever, Türk, and Batmaz (2022) introduced “meaningful life” as a mediating variable in the relationship between self-esteem and psychological resilience. Their findings suggest that self-esteem may enhance resilience more effectively when paired with a strong sense of purpose, indicating that interventions should target both self-worth and the cultivation of personally meaningful goals to achieve sustainable well-being. These findings highlight the clinical significance of self-esteem in youth mental health, underscoring its role as a crucial determinant of psychological sustainability and a target for school-based interventions.

Han, Li, Liu, and colleagues (2025) conducted a three-wave longitudinal study with Chinese adolescents to explore within- and between-person effects linking self-esteem, life satisfaction, and symptoms of depression and anxiety. They found that at the between-person level, adolescents with consistently higher self-esteem also reported greater life satisfaction and fewer internalising symptoms. At the within-person level, increases in self-esteem predicted subsequent improvements in life satisfaction and reductions in depressive and anxiety



symptoms over time. These findings provide robust longitudinal evidence that self-esteem functions not only as a stable protective factor but also as a dynamic mechanism through which mental health fluctuates, further cementing its role as a core element of psychological sustainability.

Adding a dynamic perspective, Li, Guo, Lai, Wang, ... & Lu (2023) used a three-wave longitudinal panel of Chinese adolescents and a random-intercepts cross-lagged model to disentangle within-person from between-person processes linking self-esteem, coping styles, and anxiety symptoms. Low self-esteem predicted later increases in anxiety and maladaptive coping, and elevated anxiety in turn predicted subsequent drops in self-esteem, evidence for a self-reinforcing cycle that can erode psychological sustainability if not interrupted. These bidirectional pathways appeared in both boys and girls, with some variation in strength.

Balgiu (2017) reported a positive association between self-esteem and resilience in emerging adults, whereby individuals with high self-esteem recovered more readily from stress and were more emotionally balanced. Additionally, Kwek et al. (2021) revealed that self-esteem and resilience together predict academic achievement among university students, with self-esteem enhancing performance and resilience aiding in coping with academic pressure.

A structural model proposed by González-Arratia López-Fuentes et al. (2025) in a study of Mexican schoolchildren found that self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social support significantly predicted resilience and psychological adjustment, particularly among at-risk youth. This underscores the interactive effect of intrapersonal and relational resources on sustaining well-being in vulnerable populations. The creation of supportive educational environments, particularly during adjustment periods, is vital for nurturing these traits.

Cumulatively, these studies indicate that self-esteem is a key psychological asset closely tied to resilience and long-term well-being, two core components of psychological sustainability. It not only supports recovery from difficulty but also contributes to the maintenance of well-being over time.

Song (2024) provides further support for this relationship, demonstrating that emotional regulation acts as a mediating mechanism between self-esteem and resilience in college students. This finding emphasises the importance of self-regulatory capacities in transforming self-evaluations into adaptive coping strategies.

Du, King, and Chi (2017) revisited the relationship between self-esteem and subjective well-being by differentiating among personal, relational, and collective self-esteem. In a cross-cultural sample, they found that all three dimensions positively predicted subjective well-being, but their relative influence varied by cultural orientation. Personal self-esteem was the strongest predictor in individualistic contexts, whereas relational and collective self-esteem were more influential in collectivistic cultures. This framework is particularly relevant for understanding self-esteem in Turkey, where collectivistic values often place relational and group belonging above individual autonomy. It suggests that in such contexts, interventions to enhance psychological sustainability should place greater emphasis on strengthening relational and collective self-esteem alongside the personal dimension.

Bajaj et al. (2016) identified self-esteem as a mediator between mindfulness and well-being, suggesting that enhanced mindfulness improves well-being in part through increases in self-esteem. Likewise, Duy and Yıldız (2017) found that self-esteem partially mediated the effect of optimism on life satisfaction, while Cheng and Furnham (2003) showed that self-esteem,

alongside optimistic attribution styles, explained 55% of the variance in happiness in young adults.

In sum, self-esteem is a foundational determinant of psychological resilience and general well-being. Cultivating a stable and authentic sense of self-value helps individuals manage stress more effectively and maintain a sense of balance—a hallmark of psychological sustainability. Accordingly, fostering self-esteem represents a key target for interventions aimed at enhancing sustainable mental health.

Self-esteem, as a culturally embedded psychological construct, does not function identically across all societies. In collectivistic cultures such as Turkey, where interdependence, familial loyalty, and social harmony are deeply valued, self-esteem is often more strongly influenced by relational factors than by individual achievement or autonomy (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2005). This makes the examination of self-esteem in the Turkish context particularly important when investigating psychological sustainability. Cultural norms surrounding gender roles, family expectations, and emotional expression shape how Turkish adolescents and young adults develop and maintain their self-worth, as well as how they cope with psychological stress.

One notable study by Karataş and Çakar (2011) investigated the relationships between self-esteem, hopelessness, and resilience in a sample of Turkish adolescents. Their results revealed that self-esteem significantly predicted resilience, while hopelessness was inversely related to it. Adolescents with higher self-esteem scores were more likely to report adaptive coping and greater emotional endurance, suggesting that self-esteem plays a central role in developing sustainable psychological strength in youth populations.

Baltacı and Karataş (2015) examined the predictive roles of perceived social support, depression, and life satisfaction in the resilience of secondary school students in Burdur, Turkey. Their results indicated that higher levels of perceived social support and life satisfaction were positively associated with resilience, whereas higher levels of depression were negatively associated. Although self-esteem was not a direct variable in their model, the findings indirectly underscore its importance, as perceived social support and life satisfaction are known to bolster self-esteem, which in turn enhances resilience. This study's focus on early adolescence is significant, suggesting that interventions in this developmental stage should not only target self-esteem directly but also strengthen the broader psychosocial factors that sustain it.

Similarly, Oğuz Duran and Tezer (2009) examined wellness and self-esteem among Turkish university students. They found that students with high self-esteem reported significantly higher levels of wellness in dimensions such as cognitive-emotional regulation, life purpose, and physical health. Notably, female participants scored higher on relational and physical wellness, indicating possible gendered patterns in the sources of psychological sustainability.

Ayaz and Doğan (2023) also reported a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and psychological well-being among Turkish university students, underscoring its influence on health, happiness, and academic success. These findings support the notion that self-esteem contributes to a broad sense of wellness in emerging adulthood.

Isiklar (2012) explored how psychological well-being and self-esteem interacted among university students during periods of socio-political conflict. His findings showed that students with higher levels of self-acceptance—a subdimension of psychological well-being—also demonstrated higher self-esteem, further affirming that positive self-perceptions contribute to psychological balance even amidst external turmoil. Interestingly, this study found no significant

gender differences in self-esteem levels, suggesting a convergence of male and female experiences in university contexts, potentially due to increased gender equality in educational settings.

Taken together, these findings suggest that self-esteem in Turkey functions as a pivotal factor in sustaining psychological resilience, well-being, and life satisfaction. Despite cultural differences in the sources of self-worth—where familial approval and social connectedness may play a greater role than in Western individualistic cultures—the protective effects of self-esteem appear to be consistent. That is, individuals with higher self-esteem, regardless of cultural background, are generally better equipped to manage psychological stress, regulate emotions, and maintain subjective well-being.

When comparing these findings with Western literature, a general alignment can be observed. For instance, just as Baumeister et al. (2003) and Orth and Robins (2014) demonstrate the broad psychological benefits of high self-esteem in Western populations, Turkish studies similarly associate high self-esteem with increased resilience and life satisfaction.

Likewise, Özdemir and Adıgüzel (2021) found in a study of Turkish healthcare professionals that self-esteem was positively related to both social intelligence and resilience, suggesting that sufficient self-esteem is effective in enhancing adaptive capacity across occupational contexts.

However, subtle differences emerge in the mechanisms through which self-esteem is shaped and sustained. While Western cultures often emphasise individual achievement, autonomy, and self-expression, Turkish studies highlight the importance of relational harmony, academic validation, and familial support. These culturally shaped pathways suggest that while the outcomes of high self-esteem may be similar across cultures, the routes by which individuals develop and maintain it are influenced by local values and norms.

In line with this, Çelebi (2023) demonstrated that in employees of a private company in Konya, self-esteem mediated the relationship between psychological resilience and subjective well-being, reinforcing its role as a bridge between coping resources and sustainable well-being in workplace contexts. Consequently, psychological sustainability interventions must be culturally sensitive, integrating both universal principles of self-worth and context-specific social expectations.

In addition to cultural differences in self esteem, researchers have begun to question the adequacy of evaluating self-esteem solely in terms of high or low levels. Scholars such as Kernis et al. (2008) argue that the quality of self-esteem—whether it is secure or fragile—significantly influences its psychological outcomes. Those with secure high self-esteem possess a stable and internalized sense of self-worth that is not contingent on external validation. This orientation reduces defensiveness and enhances psychological robustness. Fragile high self-esteem, by contrast, relies on external approval and is more vulnerable to fluctuations, rendering individuals psychologically susceptible.

Similarly, Greenier, Kernis, and Waschull (1999) highlighted that self-esteem stability over time is a critical factor in fostering resilience and well-being. Individuals with stable self-esteem tend to respond to life events with greater emotional balance, whereas those with unstable self-esteem exhibit heightened reactivity, particularly to negative occurrences. Thus, low and unstable self-esteem amplifies the psychological harm of adverse experiences.



These findings collectively suggest that beyond its level, the stability and authenticity of self-esteem are central to psychological sustainability and personal resilience.

## **2.2.Reconsidering Self-Esteem: The Emergence of Self-Compassion**

Although self-esteem has long been valued as a critical psychological asset, several scholars have questioned the extent of its positive impact. For instance, Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs (2003), in their comprehensive meta-analytic review, argued that the benefits attributed to high self-esteem—particularly concerning individual achievement, social functioning, and mental health—may be significantly overstated. They contended that many claims in the popular psychology literature rest on correlational rather than causal evidence. Moreover, they highlighted that self-esteem is often contingent upon external markers such as success, recognition, or social comparison. As a result, when self-worth is threatened, individuals may respond with narcissism or defensiveness, revealing the fragility and instability embedded in certain forms of high self-esteem.

While secure high self-esteem supports psychological resilience, studies such as Gu, Zhang, and Li (2024) indicate that its impact is often mediated by emotional factors such as hope and anxiety. In their study on adolescents, self-esteem was shown to indirectly affect depressive symptoms through these mediators, particularly in females. This finding supports the idea that psychological sustainability is not solely about possessing high self-worth, but also about maintaining emotional resources that regulate responses to stress.

In this context, the increasingly prominent concept of self-compassion has gained traction as a more stable and sustainable source of psychological well-being. Unlike self-esteem, self-compassion entails an unconditional acceptance of one's value, independent of performance, evaluation, or success. It provides a resilient psychological foundation—particularly in times of stress, failure, or social threat. Consequently, self-compassion is now regarded as a more enduring and effective psychological resource for supporting long-term mental health (Neff, 2003).

The next section will define the construct of self-compassion in detail and explore its interaction with psychological sustainability.

## **3. SELF-COMPASSION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Within the scope of psychological sustainability, self-compassion has emerged as a crucial internal resource. Defined as the capacity to treat oneself with kindness, understanding, and patience—particularly in the face of failure or distress—self-compassion supports emotional stability and fosters more balanced relationships with both oneself and others (Neff, 2003).

Neff's (2003, 2011) model outlines six core components of self-compassion: self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. Self-kindness involves responding to challenges not with harsh self-criticism, but with warmth and patience. In contrast, self-judgment entails overly critical self-evaluation. The component of common humanity recognizes suffering and imperfection as universal aspects of the human condition, reducing feelings of isolation. Isolation, by contrast, leads individuals to perceive their pain as unique, exacerbating disconnection. Mindfulness refers to the ability to hold one's emotions in balanced awareness, while over-identification represents the tendency to become swept up in negative thoughts and feelings. Together, these opposing elements form a cohesive framework that enhances emotional resilience and supports sustainable well-being.

A growing body of research supports the strong relationship between self-compassion, resilience, and psychological health. For example, Marshall et al. (2014), in a longitudinal study with Australian adolescents, found that high self-compassion mitigated the negative mental health outcomes associated with low self-esteem. Adolescents with low self-esteem but high self-compassion reported fewer psychological difficulties, highlighting self-compassion's protective function.

Similarly, Bluth, Mullarkey, and Lathren (2018) found that self-compassion among adolescents was positively correlated with resilience and openness to new experiences, with gender—but not age—moderating this relationship. Their findings suggest the importance of cultivating self-compassion during adolescence to support psychological adaptability. In older adults, Smith (2015) reported that higher levels of self-compassion were linked to greater happiness and reduced depression, particularly through the roles of mindfulness and self-kindness.

Neff and McGehee (2010) also demonstrated that self-compassion significantly correlated with resilience and psychological well-being among adolescents and emerging adults. Complementing this, Demetriou et al. (2023) examined Greek and Cypriot participants during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that self-compassion positively predicted resilience while negatively correlating with anxiety and fear of contagion. These results reinforce the protective role of self-compassion during collective crises and highlight its potential as a public health resource. Their findings underscored the influence of familial and cognitive factors in shaping self-compassion and enhancing coping skills.

Moreover, research by Shebuski, Bowie, and Ashby (2020) identified self-compassion as a unique protective factor in mitigating the adverse effects of trauma. In a novel application, Chehayeb et al. (2025) explored the role of self-compassion in a mixed-reality teacher training context and found that individuals with higher self-compassion demonstrated lower physiological stress, as measured by heart rate variability (HRV).

These results underscore self-compassion's effect not only on psychological but also on physiological resilience. A meta-analysis by Li et al. (2020) confirmed a consistent positive relationship between self-compassion and resilience, noting that variables such as age, gender, and cultural background may moderate this relationship and emphasizing the importance of developing culturally sensitive self-compassion interventions.

Findings from Turkey mirror those of the international literature. Yıldırım and Demirtaş-Madran (2021) found that self-compassion significantly predicted psychological well-being and resilience among Turkish university students, especially during periods of stress and emotional exhaustion. Resilience partially mediated the relationship between self-compassion and life satisfaction. Likewise, Doğan (2015) reported positive associations between self-compassion and life satisfaction, and negative associations with depressive symptoms, reinforcing its role as a protective factor within the Turkish cultural context.

Akin and Akin (2015) further demonstrated that individuals with higher self-compassion regulated negative emotions more effectively and maintained positive psychological functioning even in the face of chronic stress. Arslan and Yıldırım (2021) also found that self-compassion significantly predicted meaning-based coping and subjective well-being, with resilience serving as a mediator.

Building on these findings, Kiraz (2025) conducted a comprehensive review of national and international literature, highlighting the intertwined nature of self-compassion, resilience, and

subjective well-being. The review emphasised that self-compassion reduces self-criticism, strengthens emotional regulation, and enhances recovery from adversity, positioning it as a central mechanism of psychological sustainability.

Research across diverse Turkish populations supports this perspective. Calpbinici, Kısa, and Akbay Kısa (2024) found that in elderly women, higher self-compassion and greater satisfaction with body image predicted increased psychological well-being, underscoring self-compassion's ability to buffer against age-related and gendered stressors. In younger adult populations, Köksal, Topkaya, and Şahin (2023) reported that self-compassion was the strongest predictor of flourishing among university students, surpassing the effects of psychological vulnerability.

Additional studies extend these findings to emotional and developmental contexts. Aktaş and Şahin (2018) demonstrated that individuals with greater difficulty in regulating emotions reported lower levels of self-compassion, suggesting that interventions aimed at enhancing self-compassion may reduce maladaptive emotional patterns. Extending this evidence to children, Kahraman (2024) found that among those aged 10–13, mindfulness-based self-efficacy and self-compassion were both positively associated with happiness levels. This developmental evidence suggests that cultivating self-compassion early in life may offer long-term protective benefits for psychological sustainability.

Collectively, these findings suggest that self-compassion strengthens emotional regulation capacity, reduces self-criticism, and enhances resilience, all of which are vital to sustaining psychological well-being. Longitudinal evidence from İme et al. (2025) further supports this view, showing that self-compassion mediates the relationship between psychological maltreatment and resilience over time. Their study suggests that fostering self-compassion can interrupt the long-term negative consequences of maltreatment on emotional functioning. In culturally collectivistic contexts such as Turkey, interventions based on self-compassion may serve as effective tools to foster individual adaptation and sustainable well-being.

Self-compassion supports psychological well-being and resilience globally. In Turkey, emerging studies have begun to illuminate how self-compassion functions as a protective factor in various stress-laden contexts, reinforcing psychological sustainability.

Recent Turkish research illustrates this clearly. Yıldırım and Sarı (2022) implemented a six-week self-compassion development program for adolescents, resulting in increases in self-compassion and subjective well-being and reductions in fear of self-compassion, effects that persisted at six-week follow-up.

In healthcare settings, Harmancı and Akdeniz (2022) found that among Turkish healthcare workers dealing with COVID-19 stress, self-compassion was inversely related to stress levels, and resilience mediated this relationship—indicating self-compassion's buffering effect under extreme conditions.

Exploring adolescent clinical populations, Ateş, Gul, Bağlıcakoğlu, and Cöngöloğlu (2024) examined depressed Turkish adolescents engaging in non-suicidal self-injury. Their findings indicate that self-compassion correlates with greater psychological mindedness, suggesting that nurturing self-compassion may enhance meta-awareness and reflective capacity, critical components of sustainable emotional coping.

These studies consistently highlight self-compassion's positive role: enhancing subjective well-being, mitigating fear of self-compassion, reducing stress, and promoting introspective resilience. Though differing in population (adolescents vs. professionals, well-being vs. coping contexts) they collectively affirm that self-compassion operates as a key intrapersonal resource across age groups and social roles.

In a more targeted population, Çaka (2025) found that Turkish undergraduate nursing students with higher levels of self-compassion and resilience reported significantly lower levels of self-handicapping behaviour. This suggests that self-compassion not only supports emotional well-being but also protects against self-sabotaging patterns that hinder sustainable psychological functioning in high-stress academic environments.

Supporting this, Uslu and İme (2025) demonstrated that among high school adolescents, emotional flexibility and self-compassion partially mediated the impact of psychological abuse on resilience. Their findings highlight self-compassion's buffering effect in trauma-exposed youth and its vital role in fostering sustainable emotional recovery.

In comparison with Western studies, these Turkish findings align with global trends showing self-compassion supports emotional regulation, reduces stress and depression, and promotes resilience (e.g., Neff, 2003; Bluth et al., 2018). However, Turkish research uniquely underscores cultural nuances, such as fear of self-compassion among youth and professional caregiving contexts, hinting at cultural barriers and the need for tailored interventions. Overall, self-compassion appears to be a universally beneficial, yet culturally modulated lever for sustaining psychological well-being.

Karagöz and Uzunbacak (2023) examined the relationship between self-compassion, emotional intelligence, and resilience among university students, revealing that self-compassion was a significant predictor of both resilience and adaptive emotion regulation. Their results suggest that cultivating self-compassion may strengthen the cognitive and affective resources necessary to navigate stress effectively, aligning with existing evidence that self-compassion supports psychological sustainability by buffering against maladaptive coping.

In the context of professional training, Alibekiroğlu, Bayraktar, and Demirtaş (2024) explored self-compassion among teacher candidates, finding that higher self-compassion scores were associated with reduced burnout risk and greater teaching self-efficacy. This highlights self-compassion's role not only in personal emotional well-being but also in sustaining professional competence, echoing prior work linking it to resilience in high-stress occupational settings.

Koçak and Aktan (2024) focused on adolescents and reported that self-compassion was inversely related to both perceived stress and emotion suppression, while positively associated with psychological well-being. Their findings indicate that self-compassion fosters openness in emotional processing, thereby enhancing resilience and reducing internalized distress—mechanisms already emphasized in global self-compassion research.

Kiraz (2025) provided a comprehensive literature review synthesizing links between subjective well-being, psychological resilience, and self-compassion. The review confirms that self-compassion consistently emerges as a protective factor that reduces self-criticism, strengthens adaptive coping, and supports life satisfaction. By situating self-compassion within broader models of well-being, Kiraz's work reinforces its centrality as a universal, cross-cultural mechanism for psychological sustainability.

Recent empirical work further strengthens the evidence base for self-compassion as a core component of psychological sustainability in Turkey. Akcan and Taşören (2024) found that higher self-compassion, particularly self-kindness, was associated with lower depressive symptoms in adults, even when accounting for childhood trauma and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies such as catastrophising. Similarly, Çevik and Kırmızı (2024) reported that self-compassion strongly predicted both resilience and subjective well-being in adults, with resilience partially mediating this relationship—underscoring its dual role as both a direct and indirect contributor to psychological health.

Parallel findings have emerged across varied populations and developmental stages. Korkmaz (2023) demonstrated that among adolescents, self-compassion predicted higher resilience and lower academic burnout, reinforcing its relevance in high-stress educational contexts. Tekinarslan and Sevi Tok (2024) extended this perspective to interpersonal functioning, showing that self-compassion was positively related to forgiveness and negatively related to rumination in university students, thereby fostering more harmonious relationships. In professional preparation settings, Solmazer and Özkan (2023) observed that self-compassion among teacher candidates was linked to lower stress and depression alongside higher psychological well-being, suggesting its applicability as a resource for sustaining mental health in demanding vocational pathways.

While self-compassion has been established as a universal well-being resource, its role within Turkish cultural dynamics offers unique insights.

Recent empirical work underscores self-compassion's function in resilience and emotion regulation among Turkish adolescents. In a large sample of underprivileged Turkish adolescents, Sünbül and Güneri (2019) found that mindfulness positively predicts self-compassion, which in turn fosters resilience, with emotion regulation as a parallel mediator—explaining over 20% of the variance in resilience levels.

In the educational domain, Iskender (2009) investigated university students' self-compassion, self-efficacy, and control beliefs about learning. He reported no significant gender differences. Importantly, dimensions of self-compassion like self-kindness, awareness of common humanity, and mindfulness correlated positively with both self-efficacy and control belief for learning, while negative components (e.g., isolation, over-identification) were inversely associated.

Karataş (2021) conducted a doctoral study examining the interplay between self-compassion, masculine gender role stress (MGRS), and attitudes toward psychological intimate partner violence against women (APVAW). Among 404 Turkish male participants, self-compassion emerged as negatively correlated with both MGRS and APVAW, whereas MGRS positively predicted APVAW. Crucially, MGRS partially mediated the link between self-compassion and attitudes toward violence, suggesting that enhancing self-compassion may reduce gender-role stress and thus diminish tolerance for psychological violence in relationships.

Similarly, Kantar and Yalçın (2023) investigated how self-stigma and self-compassion mediate the relationship between MGRS and attitudes toward seeking psychological help among Turkish university men. In a serial mediation model, they found that higher MGRS increased self-stigma, which in turn diminished self-compassion—and both mediated the pathway toward negative attitudes about seeking help. This indicates that self-compassion is a protective resource that can counteract gendered barriers to psychological care.



Together, these studies illustrate the critical role of self-compassion in mitigating the harmful effects of masculinity-related stressors. In the Turkish context, cultural pressures related to masculine norms may foster defensive or aggressive attitudes, but self-compassion can act as a buffer—reducing both interpersonal harm and reluctance to seek support, thereby enhancing psychological sustainability for men.

Emerging research in Turkey has expanded the understanding of self-compassion's role in sustaining psychological well-being across diverse contexts. İmanoğlu (2021) demonstrated that in young adults, perceived parenting attitudes, self-esteem, and emotional affect significantly predicted different facets of self-compassion. Notably, the predictors varied by subdimension: for instance, supportive parenting and higher self-esteem were linked to greater self-kindness, whereas negative affect correlated with isolation and over-identification. These results underscore the complex developmental pathways through which early relational experiences shape one's ability to respond to personal setbacks with compassion, thereby influencing long-term resilience and emotional regulation.

Similarly, Uluer (2021) examined emotional eating behaviours in relation to childhood trauma, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-compassion. Higher emotional eating was associated with greater difficulties in emotion regulation—particularly in acceptance, goal-directed behaviour, and impulse control—alongside reduced mindfulness and lower self-compassion. This suggests that self-compassion may function as a protective factor in interrupting maladaptive coping cycles, with clear implications for psychological sustainability in contexts where stress manifests through harmful behavioural patterns.

In a caregiving context, Tekinarslan and Sevi Tok (2023) investigated mothers of children with intellectual disabilities and found that self-compassion, resilience, and perceived social support were all significant predictors of subjective well-being. Their path analysis indicated that resilience mediated the effects of both self-compassion and social support, collectively explaining nearly 80% of the variance in well-being scores. This finding illustrates how self-compassion not only enhances individual emotional resources but also interacts with external support systems to sustain adaptive functioning in chronically demanding environments.

Workplace and educational settings have also provided evidence of this dynamic. Öztürk and Çiçek (2023) reported that among health department trainees, self-compassion significantly mediated the relationship between resilience and employee performance. Individuals with higher self-compassion were better able to translate their resilience into tangible performance outcomes, reinforcing the idea that sustainable success is contingent upon emotional adaptability as much as technical competence.

Finally, Aras, Topkaya, and Şahin (2023) identified self-compassion as the most powerful predictor of resilience among adults, accounting for approximately 88% of the explained variance, surpassing the influence of gender, childhood trauma, and meaning in life. This finding is particularly salient in the Turkish cultural context, where collectivistic norms and family structures might otherwise be expected to play a larger role in resilience-building. Instead, the results highlight self-compassion as a universally relevant but culturally nuanced driver of psychological sustainability.

Collectively, these studies reinforce the position that self-compassion operates both independently and in concert with other psychological and social resources to enhance resilience, regulate emotions, and maintain well-being across developmental, clinical, and

occupational domains. Their findings suggest that cultivating self-compassion may be an effective strategy for sustaining adaptive functioning in both high-stress and everyday contexts.

#### **4. GENDER AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Psychological sustainability—defined as individuals’ capacity to cultivate resilience and maintain long-term well-being—cannot be fully understood without accounting for sociocultural dynamics. In this regard, gender emerges as a multidimensional and dynamic construct that significantly influences both individual psychological processes and broader social well-being.

While direct research on psychological sustainability and gender is still limited, the literature widely acknowledges that internal psychological resources such as self-esteem and self-compassion are deeply intertwined with gendered experiences. Gender, as a social construct, extends beyond biological sex to encompass how individuals identify themselves and internalize roles, expectations, and social norms (Koestner & Aube, 1995). Spence’s (1993) multifactorial model conceptualizes gender identity as comprising multiple elements—ranging from self-perceived femininity and masculinity to role behaviors, attitudes, interests, and sexual orientation. This model challenges rigid gender binaries, highlighting gender identity as a flexible and multidimensional phenomenon.

Understanding how gender interplays with psychological functioning requires attention to gender roles, gender stereotypes, and sexism. Traditional masculinity is associated with traits such as competitiveness, independence, and dominance, while femininity is linked to empathy, warmth, and interpersonal sensitivity (Özkan & Lajunen, 2005). Bem’s (1984) concept of psychological androgyny proposes that individuals embodying high levels of both masculine and feminine traits demonstrate greater psychological flexibility and resilience.

Korlat, Holzer, Schultes, Buerger, Schober, & Kollmayer (2022) provide recent empirical support for this view in an adolescent school context. Comparing masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated gender-role self-concept profiles, they found that androgynous youth—high in both masculine and feminine traits—reported the most favourable school-related well-being, including engagement, belonging, and academic satisfaction. The study also underscored that feminine traits (e.g., cooperation, empathy) contributed uniquely to positive outcomes, suggesting that balanced gender-role flexibility may promote both adjustment and educational sustainability during adolescence.

Gender stereotypes involve both descriptive norms (how men and women are expected to behave) and prescriptive norms (how they should behave) (Rudman & Glick, 2001). Deviation from these norms—particularly by women adopting assertive or dominant roles—often leads to social penalties, restricting women’s access to psychological resources such as autonomy and self-worth. These rigid scripts may therefore constrain adaptive functioning and psychological sustainability.

Harrington, Overall, and Maxwell (2022) expand on this perspective by demonstrating how internalized femininity norms influence women’s daily self-worth. In two intensive diary studies, women who reported higher levels of feminine gender-role stress experienced lower self-esteem on days they felt less aligned with traditional femininity ideals. This variability in self-worth highlights how rigid gender expectations can destabilize emotional well-being and impede psychological sustainability—particularly among women who internalize these norms strongly.

Extending this line of work, Li, Liu, and Song (2022) examined why people internalise gender stereotypes and how doing so relates to well-being. In a Chinese college sample, stronger gender self-stereotyping predicted higher life satisfaction indirectly through increases in both relational self-esteem (RSE) and personal self-esteem (PSE); notably, the serial mediation pathway (gender self-stereotyping → RSE → PSE → life satisfaction) was significant for men but weak for women. These results suggest that in some cultural contexts, conforming to traditional gendered expectations can bolster self-evaluations, highlighting the need for culturally sensitive models of psychological sustainability.

Sexism further perpetuates gender inequality in both explicit and subtle forms. According to Glick and Fiske's (1996) Ambivalent Sexism Theory, sexism manifests in two dimensions: hostile sexism, characterized by overt negative attitudes, and benevolent sexism, which includes protective but patronizing beliefs. Both forms can undermine women's psychological agency and hinder sustainable well-being.

Empirical studies increasingly demonstrate the relevance of gender-role orientations for psychological outcomes. For instance, Lam and McBride-Chang (2007) showed that masculine and feminine traits influenced stress-coping strategies and psychosocial adjustment among Chinese young adults. Similarly, Whitley's (1983) meta-analysis found that masculinity, independent of biological sex, was strongly associated with self-esteem.

Lo, Kim, Small, and Chan (2019) extended this research into a sexual-minority context. Among Chinese lesbian women, masculine and androgynous gender-role identities were linked to higher self-esteem, whereas a traditionally feminine orientation predicted lower self-esteem; in turn, self-esteem fully mediated the association between gender-role profile and depression. The findings show that access to self-valuing resources depends on how gendered traits are socially valued, and that minority women may be especially vulnerable when femininity is tied to lower standing, implications that matter for inclusive models of psychological sustainability.

Matud et al. (2019), in a Spanish sample, found masculinity to be a predictor of well-being for both men and women, while femininity predicted occupational and relational satisfaction in women. A study by Mayor-Silva et al. (2025) with nursing students showed that psychological androgyny and masculine role orientation predicted higher resilience—more so than biological sex.

Sociocultural factors also play a significant role. In patriarchal societies, the internalization of traditional gender roles may restrict women's access to resources and weaken psychological resilience (Zulfiyan, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, comparative studies from Turkey and Italy revealed that traditional gender norms in Turkey, especially among less-educated individuals, acted as temporary coping mechanisms (Tintori et al., 2020).

Recent experimental evidence also helps clarify how gendered socio-emotional capacities contribute to sustainable relational functioning. In two large studies using immersive, video-based social tasks, McDonald and Kanske (2023) found that women showed higher empathy and compassion than men, yet no reliable gender difference in Theory of Mind; in a prosocial donation paradigm, women also gave more to help others. Because empathy and compassionate responding are crucial for cooperative, community-level resilience, these findings suggest that cultivating such traits—irrespective of gender—may strengthen psychological sustainability at group and societal levels.

Meanwhile, in professional settings, women displaying instrumental traits often faced social backlash, which in turn impaired both well-being and career advancement (Phelan, Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2008).

Napier et al. (2010) found that national culture influences the psychological impact of gender beliefs. In societies with higher gender equality, adherence to traditional gender roles was associated with increased psychological comfort, whereas in unequal contexts, this effect was diminished.

Cross-cultural findings further support the psychological benefits of gender egalitarianism. Nguyen et al. (2019) reported higher levels of life satisfaction and resilience among individuals living in more gender-equal societies. Beutel et al. (2017) found that egalitarian beliefs within romantic relationships predicted lower depressive symptoms and higher relationship satisfaction, while Fischer and Boer (2011) demonstrated that gender equality was linked to reduced psychological distress and improved emotional regulation.

Supporting these trends, Schmitt, Realo, Voracek, and Allik (2008) examined Big Five personality traits across 55 cultures and found that women scored higher in Agreeableness and Neuroticism than men, while men scored slightly higher in Assertiveness and Openness to Ideas. Interestingly, gender differences in personality were more pronounced in more egalitarian, affluent nations, suggesting that social progress may amplify, rather than eliminate, certain dispositional traits. These nuanced findings complicate assumptions about universal gender convergence and highlight the importance of contextualizing psychological traits within cultural norms.

Weisberg, DeYoung, and Hirsh (2011) further refined this picture by examining facet-level differences within the Big Five framework. They found that women were higher in compassion, politeness, warmth, and vulnerability, whereas men scored higher on assertiveness and intellectual curiosity. These personality nuances shape how individuals express and sustain traits like empathy, resilience, and emotional regulation—core components of psychological sustainability. Incorporating gendered personality structures into well-being models can therefore enrich future research and intervention design.

In conclusion, gender, as a sociopsychological and cultural variable, profoundly shapes individuals' capacities for psychological sustainability. In women's experiences in particular, the internalization of restrictive roles may limit self-compassion, dampen autonomy, and undermine resilience. Hence, gender-sensitive and structurally informed approaches are essential in designing interventions and policies that promote equitable psychological well-being.

While the broader literature reveals how gendered identities shape psychological sustainability across contexts, several Turkish studies provide culturally-specific insights that deepens our understanding in local spheres of stress, resilience, and coping and well being.

In a study on gender roles and well-being in Turkish culture, Yar, Ulaş, and Vefikuluçay Yılmaz (2022) found that androgynous individuals reported the highest levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction, whereas those with ambiguous gender roles reported the lowest. This result highlights the positive aspect of androgynous personality traits, which are considered a combination of feminine and masculine characteristics, and is consistent with findings from international studies.

Dündar (2024) examined the relationship between masculine gender role stress and psychological well-being in men. The study found that higher levels of masculine gender role stress are associated with lower psychological well-being. Furthermore, difficulties in identifying and expressing emotions were found to mediate this relationship. These results highlight how societal expectations regarding male gender roles can create stress that negatively impacts men's emotional processing and overall mental health.

Collectively, these findings suggest that masculine traits alone are insufficient to promote well-being; instead, feminine qualities -such as empathy and compassion within interpersonal relationships- emerge as critical determinants of psychological well-being.

In addition to personality traits, the influence of attitudes toward gender roles was examined in the study conducted by Palas Karaca and Çubukçu Aksu (2024). Their research explored how masculine gender role stress affects psychological well-being among male participants. The findings demonstrated a significant negative relationship between masculine gender role stress and psychological well-being.

Complementing this, a study of Turkish men's mental health and gender norms highlighted how internalizing traditional masculine role expectations may undermine psychological well-being. While not conducted within Turkey, Rice et al.'s (2011) analysis found that older men who adhered more strongly to masculine norms reported increasingly greater depression, suggesting that normative pressures amplify mental health risks over time

Finally, international research on masculinity and mental health help seeking underscores a parallel dynamic: traditional ideals of stoicism and self-reliance, often demanded by gender norms, appear to delay psychological help seeking, raising the risk of sustained distress and reduced adaptive coping.

As emphasized by Saygan and Uludağlı (2024), the social construction of gender roles begins early in life and is continuously reinforced by key agents such as family, peers, and media. Children internalize culturally prescribed gender norms through these influences, which shape their behaviors and self-concepts from infancy through adolescence. Consistent with prevailing cultural expectations, girls are generally socialized to be nurturing, compliant, and emotionally expressive, whereas boys are encouraged to develop dominance, independence, and emotional restraint. These gendered socialization processes contribute to the formation of enduring cognitive schemas that influence identity development and psychosocial functioning throughout the lifespan.

Consequently, these gendered expectations impose distinct pressures on both females and males. Girls often face constraints related to conformity with submissive and caregiving roles, which may limit autonomy and increase psychological distress, while boys are burdened with expectations of emotional control, strength, and economic responsibility, factors linked to stress and social isolation. These differentiated experiences highlight the necessity of gender-sensitive policies and interventions aimed at mitigating the psychosocial impacts of gender socialization and promoting well-being and equality (Saygan & Uludağlı, 2024)

Together, these Turkish-relevant findings illustrate how gendered cultural scripts, whether in reproductive life, identity conformity, or emotional self-regulation, can both threaten and shape resilience. They underscore that psychological sustainability in Turkey, as well as other cultures,



is deeply influenced by culturally specific gender expectations, reinforcing the need for gender-sensitive support strategies that honor local meanings of self, health, and agency.

## **5. EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS**

Psychological sustainability depends not only on the regulation of internal resources - such as self-esteem and self-compassion- but also on the individual's ability to navigate and integrate sociocultural dynamics, such as gender roles. Strengthening these resources supports emotional well-being, resilience, and the development of equitable social attitudes. In this regard, psychoeducational programs represent effective tools for fostering psychological sustainability.

The Mindful Self-Compassion Program (MSC), developed by Neff and Germer (2013), is an eight-week structured intervention aimed at enhancing self-compassion. Two separate studies were conducted to assess its efficacy. The first, a pilot study (N = 21), revealed significant improvements in self-compassion, mindfulness, and well-being indicators. The second, a randomized controlled trial (N = 25 intervention; N = 27 control), found that participants in the intervention group reported higher gains in self-compassion, mindfulness, social connectedness, and life satisfaction, alongside reductions in depression, anxiety, and emotional avoidance. These improvements were largely sustained at six-month and one-year follow-ups.

Notably, increases in self-compassion were stronger predictors of gains in well-being and emotional health than increases in mindfulness alone, and the frequency of practice demonstrated a positive dose-response relationship. The MSC program thus emerges as an effective and sustainable skill-building intervention that enhances not only personal well-being but also sensitivity toward others.

In the Turkish context, Sir and Lok (2024) developed a psychoeducational self-esteem enhancement program targeting early adolescents. Delivered in weekly sessions, the program addressed themes such as self-awareness, emotional expression, body image, and social relationships. The results indicated increases in self-esteem and a decrease in peer victimization. This suggests that structured interventions can promote individual well-being while also reducing social harm during a critical developmental period.

Supporting these findings, Niveau, New, and Beaudoin (2021) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of self-esteem interventions in adults. Similarly, Auttama (2021) investigated university students and found that psychological self-care strategies—such as mindfulness, reflective journaling, and assertiveness training—were significantly associated with increases in self-esteem, resilience, and mental health. These results further validate the integration of self-care into psychoeducational programs as a pathway to psychological sustainability. Across diverse clinical trials, they found that improving self-esteem reliably led to reductions in anxiety, depression, and stress, as well as enhanced overall well-being. These results affirm self-esteem's status as a modifiable protective factor and reinforce the long-term value of structured psychoeducational programs in enhancing psychological sustainability.

Similarly, Auttama (2021) investigated university students and found that psychological self-care strategies—such as mindfulness, reflective journaling, and assertiveness training—were significantly associated with increases in self-esteem, resilience, and mental health. These results further validate the integration of self-care into psychoeducational programs as a pathway to psychological sustainability.

Thapa et al. (2025) implemented an experiential learning program in Nepalese public schools aimed at empowering adolescents to recognize and resist gender-based discrimination and harassment. The curriculum included gender norm awareness, harassment response strategies, self-defense, legal literacy, and mindfulness techniques. Participants exhibited increased awareness of gender-based harm, more egalitarian attitudes, and enhanced self-protective skills. These outcomes, evident immediately following the short-term intervention, highlight the program's value as a preventative strategy. The researchers advocate for curricular integration in contexts with widespread gender-based violence.

In the Turkish higher education context, Kardaş and Gen (2024) designed a structured psychoeducational program aimed at cultivating self-compassion among university students. Delivered in weekly group sessions, the program incorporated mindfulness practices, reflective exercises, and discussions on self-kindness, common humanity, and balanced emotional awareness. Participants demonstrated significant increases in overall self-compassion and resilience, accompanied by reductions in self-criticism and negative affect. Follow-up assessments indicated that these improvements were maintained over time, highlighting the program's long-term effectiveness. By addressing both cognitive and emotional components of self-compassion, this intervention reinforced intrapersonal resources while fostering more compassionate interpersonal engagement, thus contributing to psychological sustainability in academic settings.

These examples collectively demonstrate that psychological sustainability-related competencies—ranging from intrapersonal insight to gender equity awareness—can be cultivated through structured educational interventions. Supporting both individual and collective resilience, such programs offer crucial pathways toward sustainable well-being.

## **6. TURKISH CULTURE**

Recent national and international studies, as well as intervention programs, have consistently demonstrated that intra-individual factors such as self-esteem and self-compassion, along with interpersonal and sociocultural variables such as gender, exert a sustained influence on resilience and well-being—key indicators of psychological sustainability. While these findings suggest a degree of universality, it is important to recognize that constructs such as self and gender are inherently shaped within specific cultural frameworks. In this regard, although research conducted within the Turkish cultural context often parallels findings from Western societies, the developmental trajectories of these constructs, as well as individuals' socialization processes, differ markedly from those observed in individualistic Western cultures. Accordingly, it is essential to underscore the role of culture in shaping the meaning, manifestation, and measurement of these psychological constructs, particularly when applied in cross-cultural contexts.

Culture, often conceptualized along the individualism-collectivism continuum (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995), shapes how individuals define themselves, relate to others, and develop psychological resilience. In individualistic cultures, common in many Western societies, autonomy, personal goals, and uniqueness are emphasized, with the self largely defined by internal traits and individual achievements. In contrast, collectivist cultures, such as Turkey's, prioritize social bonds, group harmony, and relational responsibilities, shaping self-construals that are embedded within social networks and communal obligations

Markus and Kitayama's (1991) seminal framework distinguishes between independent and interdependent self-construals, highlighting how cultural contexts influence whether individuals see themselves as autonomous agents or as interconnected with others. This distinction has direct implications for the development of self-esteem and self-compassion. In collectivist contexts, where social approval and relational harmony are prioritized, self-esteem is often relationally grounded, and the experience of self-compassion may differ from Western conceptualizations, given the normative emphasis on prioritizing others over the self.

Kağıtçıbaşı's (2005) "autonomous-related self" model challenges the dichotomy of autonomy versus relatedness, proposing that these dimensions can coexist. This perspective is particularly relevant for cultures like Turkey's, where individuals negotiate both personal autonomy and social connectedness. Therefore, examining self-esteem and self-compassion in such contexts requires attention to both internal psychological processes and the influence of family and close relationships.

Moreover, culture shapes not only self-related processes but also gendered social practices. Gender is not solely a biological category but a cultural construct shaped by normative roles and expectations. Cross and Madson (1997) demonstrate that men tend to adopt independent self-construals, whereas women more frequently develop interdependent self-construals, reflecting and reinforcing gendered cognitive, emotional, and social differences. For example, women often maintain self-esteem through relational support and caregiving behaviors, while men may assert uniqueness and status, sometimes by diminishing others. These dynamics illustrate how gendered selves are culturally embedded and influence psychological functioning.

In sum, understanding the interplay between self-esteem, self-compassion, gender, and psychological sustainability requires integrating cultural context as a fundamental factor. Particularly in collectivist cultures like Turkey's, these constructs are deeply interwoven with social relationships and cultural norms. A culturally informed perspective is therefore essential for advancing theories and interventions aimed at promoting sustainable psychological well-being.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

This study examined the emerging concept of psychological sustainability through the lens of internal psychological resources—namely, self-esteem and self-compassion—as well as the sociocultural variable of gender. Unlike short-term coping strategies, psychological sustainability involves maintaining well-being over time through stable psychological processes (Di Fabio & Tsuda, 2018; Di Fabio, 2021). By cultivating internal resilience, individuals can not only withstand life's challenges but also contribute meaningfully to both personal and societal well-being.

The first psychological variable addressed was self-esteem, conceptualized as a general evaluation of one's self-worth (Baumeister et al., 2003; Hewitt, 2009). The empirical studies discussed in the relevant section consistently demonstrate that high self-esteem is positively associated with well-being and functioning in both cross-cultural and national studies. Accordingly, high self-esteem emerges as a robust intrapersonal resource, as expected, that plays a critical role in psychological sustainability

However, as mentioned earlier self-esteem is not a uniform construct; secure (internally grounded) and fragile (externally dependent) forms yield different psychological outcomes.

Secure self-esteem is positively associated with resilience and healthy social functioning, while fragile self-esteem is linked to defensiveness, affective instability, and psychological distress. Thus, self-esteem that is stable and internally sourced may serve as a more reliable predictor of psychological sustainability (Arslan, 2020; Cheng & Furnham, 2003).

Further distinguishing between secure and insecure self-worth, Orth, Robins, Meier, and Conger (2016) tested the vulnerability model of depression and found that low genuine self-esteem, but not narcissism, predicted future depressive symptoms. This longitudinal evidence suggests that fragile or externally dependent forms of self-esteem do not confer resilience and may even mask vulnerability. Psychological sustainability, therefore, depends on fostering internally anchored self-worth.

Also, Orth and Robins (2022) synthesized longitudinal studies and concluded that high self-esteem predicts improved outcomes across multiple life domains, including mental health, academic achievement, interpersonal functioning, and reduced antisocial behaviour. Crucially, they clarified that genuine self-esteem, which is very distinct from narcissism, has consistent protective value over time. These findings reinforce the conceptualization of self-esteem as a driver of psychological sustainability, not just a correlate of short-term success.

Zell and Johansson (2024) reinforce this conclusion with their synthesis of 40 meta-analyses spanning mental health, physical well-being, academic success, and social functioning. Their findings show that high self-esteem is robustly linked to better life outcomes across age groups and cultures, making it one of the most widely supported intrapersonal predictors of long-term well-being. This comprehensive evidence base supports the prioritization of self-esteem in psychological sustainability frameworks.

In other words, high self-esteem is generally associated with positive outcomes and sustainable mental health. However, as highlighted by international researchers, it is crucial to distinguish whether the self-esteem in question is authentic or fragile. In this regard, domestic scholars should also pay particular attention to the vulnerable aspects of self-esteem, ensuring that educational and intervention programs address these nuances appropriately.

As mentioned earlier, the positive role of self-esteem in resilience and well-being is consistent with international findings (e.g., Oğuz Duran & Tezer, 2009; Isiklar, 2012). However, While Western cultures often emphasise individual achievement, autonomy, and self-expression, Turkish studies highlight the importance of relational harmony, academic validation, and familial support. These culturally shaped pathways suggest that while the outcomes of high self-esteem may be similar across cultures, the routes by which individuals develop and maintain it are influenced by local values and norms.

Moreover, as previously noted, in collectivist-leaning cultures such as ours, social bonds hold significant importance, and being accepted or validated by others is highly valued. In this context, for an individual who places great importance on approval, low self-esteem goes beyond a mere psychological construct; it must be understood within the cultural framework that shapes such needs. Thus, examining self-esteem through this culturally embedded lens is essential for a comprehensive understanding of what self-esteem signifies in the Turkish context.

To address the limitations of self-esteem, this study incorporated the construct of self-compassion, defined as a non-judgmental, accepting stance toward oneself during experiences of failure or inadequacy (Neff & McGehee, 2010). Because self-compassion is less reliant on social

comparison or external validation, it is considered a more stable and teachable psychological resource. Intervention studies show that self-compassion fosters emotion regulation, self-awareness, and adaptive coping, thereby supporting long-term well-being.

As outlined in the introduction, similar with self-esteem, numerous national and international studies and intervention programs have demonstrated that self-compassion serves as a vital resource for psychological sustainability. The nonjudgmental and compassionate relationship one cultivates with oneself has been shown to positively influence not only intrapersonal well-being but also the quality of interpersonal relationships and overall psychological health. However, similar to self-esteem, the cultural interpretation of self-compassion warrants careful consideration.

In collectivist cultures characterized by interdependent social relationships, compassion toward others and self-sacrificial behaviors are often valorized, while the relationship with the self may be neglected or overlooked. Self-compassion, therefore, challenges this prevailing paradigm by emphasizing inward attention and kindness toward oneself rather than outward-directed care alone. Accordingly, intervention studies and clinical applications must take these cultural nuances into account. Researchers and practitioners should explore the significance of intrapersonal factors, such as self-boundaries and the quality of the self-to-self relationship, alongside interpersonal dynamics to provide a culturally sensitive understanding and effective implementation of self-compassion practices.

The third core component, gender, was analyzed as a multidimensional construct encompassing role orientations (e.g., masculinity, femininity), belief systems (e.g., gender stereotypes), and structural inequalities (e.g., ambivalent sexism). Research suggests that masculine or androgynous role orientations are positively associated with resilience and well-being. However, the quality of self-esteem underlying these orientations remains an important moderating factor. Feminine-coded traits such as empathy and nurturance can contribute to resilience when embraced within a framework that also encourages self-compassion and agency.

Moreover, as emphasized by numerous gender theorists, it is essential to recognize that social gender—encompassing gender stereotypes, gender roles, and sexism, as highlighted in this study—manifests in diverse ways that shape human behavior and sociocultural structures. Awareness of these nuanced influences is critical for effective practice and intervention. For instance, an individual may endorse gender equality in principle, yet remain constrained by highly masculine or feminine gender roles, thereby perpetuating stereotypical patterns that limit both their own life and that of others. Consequently, each subdimension of social gender attitudes should be addressed and evaluated distinctly to fully capture its specific impact and facilitate targeted approaches.

Notably, internalized gender norms in collectivist cultures may constrain the development of self-compassion, particularly among women. In Turkey, where collectivist values such as interdependence, harmony, and respect for authority are deeply embedded in the cultural fabric (Hofstede, 2001), individuals often derive their sense of self-worth from social relationships rather than individual achievement (Triandis, 1995). This relational orientation increases the risk of fragile self-esteem, particularly when social approval is lacking.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the concept of self-compassion may be misunderstood or undervalued in such contexts. especially for women, self-compassion may be perceived as selfishness or self-indulgence. This cultural misconception can hinder the development of self-



directed kindness and emotional resilience. Women may internalize traditional expectations of self-sacrifice and emotional labor, which can limit their ability to access protective psychological resources.

To address this, culturally adapted interventions are necessary. As Kağıtçıbaşı's (2005) autonomous-related self model suggests, it is possible to promote psychological growth while preserving interdependence. Programs that emphasize both relatedness and autonomy, such as cultivating self-compassion not in opposition to, but in harmony with, care for others, can help individuals navigate cultural norms while fostering internal stability.

Furthermore, education systems and media in Turkey can play a transformative role in shifting cultural narratives. Incorporating discussions on self-worth, gender equality, and emotional literacy into school curricula can challenge rigid gender roles.

In summary, these psychological constructs—self-esteem, self-compassion, and gender—must be understood within their broader cultural contexts. Drawing on Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions, Turkey exhibits pronounced collectivist characteristics, wherein self-worth is often relational and externally validated, potentially heightening vulnerability to fragile self-esteem (Triandis, 1995). This cultural backdrop may also constrain the cultivation of inward-oriented resources such as self-compassion. Nonetheless, Kağıtçıbaşı's (2005) autonomous-related self model provides a valuable framework for collectivist societies like Turkey, suggesting that individuals can achieve autonomy while sustaining meaningful social connections, thereby fostering a culturally congruent and integrated approach to psychological sustainability..

## **8.IMPLICATIONS**

The findings of this review address the concept of psychological sustainability by integrating both intrapersonal resources—namely self-esteem and self-compassion—and the sociocultural factor of gender, which shapes interpersonal relationships and broader cultural dynamics. In addition, studies conducted within the Turkish cultural context were examined to highlight the interplay between these variables and cultural factors. In light of the reviewed literature, the implications regarding the study variables are outlined below:

**Self-Esteem:** Both national and international studies highlight self-esteem as a key factor in psychological resilience and well-being, underpinning psychological sustainability. Beyond its level, the quality of self-esteem—whether authentic or fragile—is crucial. While Western individualistic cultures emphasize authentic, stable self-esteem independent of external validation, collectivist societies like Turkey often prioritize social approval, which may increase fragile self-esteem. Therefore, interventions must consider cultural values around social approval and be adapted to the sociocultural context. This culturally sensitive approach is essential to effectively promote psychological sustainability. For policymakers and service providers, this means designing culturally sensitive programs that not only build self-esteem but also address its vulnerability within social dynamics. Incorporating community engagement and fostering environments that validate both individual autonomy and relational harmony can enhance the effectiveness of psychological support and promote sustainable well-being.

**Self-Compassion:** Evidence from national and international research underscores self-compassion as a vital intrapersonal resource for understanding and fostering psychological sustainability. In individualistic Western cultures—where personal boundaries and individuality are emphasized—self-compassion tends to be more easily understood and internalized.

Conversely, in collectivist contexts such as Turkey, where social harmony and the pursuit of others' approval are highly valued, approaching one's own mistakes with compassion may be a relatively unfamiliar concept. In this respect, interventions and counseling programs should address the cultural dimension of approval-seeking and social conformity tendencies.

**Gender:** Gender is a sociocultural factor that profoundly influences the acquisition and utilization of psychological resources. In Turkey, traditional gender roles can be internalized in ways that limit women's self-compassion and sense of autonomy. For men, prevailing norms that emphasize strength and emotional invulnerability may constrain healthy self-assessment and emotional expression. As noted earlier, gender is a multidimensional construct encompassing personality traits, attitudes, and discrimination. For instance, an individual may espouse egalitarian attitudes yet unconsciously conform to traditional role expectations due to internalized gender norms. The rigid separation of feminine and masculine traits can limit self-esteem, self-compassion, and, consequently, psychological sustainability for both genders.

Accordingly, incorporating the dimension of gender roles into not only individual counseling and intervention programs but also broader mental health policies could enhance both individual sustainability and collective psychosocial well-being.

## **9. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Psychological sustainability is a relatively novel concept, and empirical research within the literature remains limited. Accordingly, this review underscores the value of future empirical investigations into the proposed variables, which are expected to significantly advance the field. Nonetheless, the current study has certain limitations. The predominance of Western-centric and cross-sectional studies in the literature poses challenges regarding cultural sensitivity and generalizability.

Moreover, concrete quantitative evidence elucidating the practical interaction between gender and cultural context is still insufficient. Future research should prioritize longitudinal and experimental designs, particularly within collectivist cultures, to explore the complex interplay between psychological resources and gender roles.

Beside quantitative research designs, qualitative research methods are essential for gaining an in-depth understanding of individuals' lived experiences. In collectivist and culturally rich contexts such as Turkey, methodologies such as Online Photovoice (OPV; Doyumağaç et al., 2021) and Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR; Salimi et al., 2021) might be particularly valuable for exploring psychosocial constructs such as self-esteem, self-compassion, and gender roles.

Online Photovoice (OPV) is a qualitative, participatory research method that combines visual storytelling with digital technology. It enables participants to capture and share their lived experiences through photographs and narratives, fostering deeper reflection and dialogue. By leveraging online platforms, OPV allows for broader, more diverse participation without the constraints of physical presence. This method emphasizes empowerment, collaboration, and contextual understanding, making it especially suited for exploring complex social, cultural, and personal issues in a flexible and accessible way (Doyumğaç et al., 2021). Based on this method, numerous researchers have obtained in-depth insights into participants' experiences across various studies

For example, Tanhan and Strack's (2020) study with Muslim youth in the United States used OPV to identify biopsychosocial and spiritual strengths and challenges, combining photographs and written accounts. Findings were shared with communities and stakeholders, fostering advocacy and social awareness. These examples demonstrate that OPV offers a safe and accessible means of sharing lived experiences, particularly in contexts where face-to-face communication is limited.

OPV's strengths are especially relevant for investigating complex variables such as self-esteem, self-compassion, and gender, which are deeply influenced by social and cultural contexts. In Turkey, where strong social ties and intricate cultural norms shape individual identities and interpersonal relationships, OPV provides a safe, accessible space for participants to articulate their experiences both personally and communally. By capturing visual and narrative data, OPV allows researchers to explore the nuanced interplay between gender socialization, self-concept, and culturally embedded values.

Waalkes et al. (2024) employed the OPV methodology to explore the professional identity development of counselor educators with international backgrounds, demonstrating OPV's capacity to facilitate rich, participant-driven qualitative data collection remotely. This method proved especially effective in amplifying marginalized voices, fostering critical dialogue, and promoting cultural sensitivity through accessible digital platforms.

Given these strengths, OPV holds significant potential for research in gender and self-related domains. Specifically, it can enable participants to visually and narratively express nuanced experiences of gender socialization and self-concept within diverse cultural contexts, providing deeper insight into the interplay between identity formation and sociocultural factors. OPV's flexibility and inclusivity make it a promising tool for capturing complex, intersectional dynamics inherent in gender and self-esteem research.

Furthermore, when combined with Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), OPV enhances community engagement, democratizes knowledge production, and strengthens the social impact of research.

According to Salimi et al. (2021), Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach that engages researchers and community members as equal partners throughout the research process. This method emphasizes power-sharing, mutual respect, and the development of sustainable partnerships. Salimi highlights that CBPR not only enhances the scientific rigor of studies but also increases their social relevance and impact by fostering community ownership. Such ownership improves the applicability and sustainability of research outcomes, particularly in addressing the needs of marginalized or underserved populations.

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) and Online Photovoice (OPV) are valuable for studying self-esteem, self-compassion, and gender in Turkey because they involve communities as active partners. This is important in Turkey's collectivist culture, where social and cultural norms strongly influence these concepts. OPV lets participants share their experiences through photos and stories, even remotely, making it easier to capture personal and cultural meanings. Together, CBPR and OPV provide deeper, culturally relevant insights and help design better, community-focused programs and policies.

Besides the methodology, also in terms of content, to achieve a deeper understanding of psychological sustainability from intra-individual, interpersonal, and cultural perspectives, future research should consider a wide range of individual and social variables. Psychological

sustainability, consistent with the perspective of positive psychology, focuses on enhancing positive qualities and maintaining such states over the long term.

In this context, psychological capital (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience) emerges as a strong antecedent. As defined by Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017), PsyCap represents a developable psychological resource that enables individuals to exert motivated effort toward their goals, cope with challenges, and maintain positive expectations for the future. Therefore, further theoretical and empirical studies should examine the impact of psychological capital on psychological sustainability.

Another promising construct is cognitive flexibility, defined as the capacity to adapt to changing and uncertain conditions, develop new strategies, and update behaviors accordingly (Lee et al., 2024). Individuals with high cognitive flexibility tend to be more effective at coping with stress and preserving psychological resources. Thus, longitudinal and experimental studies could explore the direct and indirect effects of cognitive flexibility on psychological sustainability, as well as its potential mediating or moderating roles.

Self-regulation is also critical for sustaining psychological resilience. As emphasized by Baumeister and Vohs (2016), self-regulation refers to the ability to control one's behaviors and emotions, sustain motivation, and resist ego depletion. A decline in self-regulatory capacity may impair individuals' ability to cope with stress, thereby undermining psychological sustainability. Consequently, future research should investigate the role of self-regulation in maintaining psychological sustainability.

Finally, social support might play a significant moderating role in sustaining psychological well-being. According to the "buffering hypothesis" proposed by Cohen and Wills (1985), social support mitigates the negative effects of stress and enhances psychological resilience. Investigating how social support processes operate across different cultural and social contexts would contribute to the development of sustainable mental health policies.

In sum, the relatively novel construct of psychological sustainability, which encompasses resilience and the preservation of long-term well-being, presents a broad scope for future research. Scholars may investigate an array of intra-individual, interpersonal, social, and cultural factors to deepen understanding of its antecedents and mechanisms.

Additionally, the development and rigorous evaluation of culturally tailored intervention programs are imperative to enhance psychological sustainability in diverse sociocultural settings. It is anticipated that empirical studies conducted within Turkey in the coming years will enrich and deepen the understanding of psychological sustainability in non-Western, collectivist cultural frameworks.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

By examining self-esteem, self-compassion, and gender through the lens of psychological sustainability, this study highlights the critical need to integrate both intrapersonal and sociocultural factors. These variables not only shape individual well-being but also contribute to collective resilience and the advancement of social justice. In particular, the Turkish context demonstrates how cultural and gendered dynamics intricately shape psychological outcomes, calling for holistic approaches to mental health and sustainability. The intrapersonal and interpersonal variables discussed herein provide an important foundation for future research, especially in collectivist societies where social interdependence plays a prominent role. In

summary, this review offers empirical research suggestions for the relatively novel concept of psychological sustainability and provides recommendations for psychoeducational programs aimed at enhancing this construct.

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**Çatışma Beyanı:** Makalenin yazarları, bu çalışma ile ilgili taraf olabilecek herhangi bir kişi, kurum veya kuruluş ile finansal ilişkileri bulunmadığını dolayısıyla herhangi bir çıkar çatışmasının olmadığını beyan eder.

**Etik Kurul İzni:** Araştırma derleme makalesidir. Etik Kurul İzninden muaftır.

**Destek ve Teşekkür:** Çalışmada herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.

**Katkı Oranı:** Ferzan Curun%60, Defne Gökalp: %40