

Impact of Self-Compassion in Enhancing Motivation of Employees Working in the Corporate Sector

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Abstract

Conventional thinking on motivation puts the focus on tangible rewards, such as monetary remuneration, whereas current research highlights self-compassion psychology as an important determinant of workplace output, employee engagement and job satisfaction. However this study aimed to explore the correlation between self-compassion and 6 types of motivation and 3 varying levels of education among IT professionals of South India, which uses an ex post facto research design, where the participants were asked to fill out the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) and Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) and data collected through an online survey was tested using Pearson's correlation and independent t-test to observe the relationship between self-compassion and 6 types of motivation and the relationship between education levels and motivational factors like irrelevant motivational factors, meaningful motivational factors, self-compassionate actions and irrelevant self-compassionate actions, the result does not show significant relationship between self-compassion and the 6 motivational factors ($p > 0.05$) and no significant differences between motivation and education levels and between self-compassionate actions and education levels was found. Results show that organizational aspects are a major factor of a workplace's motivation, and further research should focus on these aspects to determine what workplace leadership and job structure need to foster weak or strong motivational environments.

Keywords: Self-compassion, Employee Motivation, IT Sector, Organizational Behavior, Workplace

1. Introduction

Recent years have witnessed intense competition and demand in the environment of business. Therefore, a study aimed at employee well-being and productivity has become essential. Self-compassion is a concept that was developed by Neff and her coworkers around the turn of the millennium (Neff, 2003) [5]. It involves treating oneself kindly and understandingly in the face of misfortune or difficulty. A theory about self-compassion consists of three essential elements that include treating oneself with gentleness instead of self-doubt while recognizing shared humanness and practicing focused non-attachment instead of intense identification with problems (Neff, 2011) [8]. Study results indicate that higher self-compassionate individuals achieve better mental health outcomes which combine reduced anxiety and depression symptoms with increased life satisfaction (Barnard & Neff, 2013) [9]. The workplace has demonstrated

that self-compassion leads to multiple constructive outcomes at work. Self-compassionate employees often demonstrate improved stress management in the workplace, greater resilience, and higher job satisfaction (Reizer, 2019) [12]. A significant positive relationship exists between self-compassion and well-being in the work environment according to Barnard and Curry (2021) [13]. On the other hand, employee motivation is one of the long-considered focal subjects by researchers and practitioners. Motivation, in general, can be defined as the status of being a force to actuate the response of an individual (Ryan & Deci, 2000) [4]. After all, employee motivation helps organizations foster productivity, create an environment for innovation, and achieve organizational goals. Three theories exist to analyze and boost workplace employee motivation including Maslow's Needs Hierarchy (Maslow, 1943) [1] and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, 1966) [2] and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) [3]. The papers by Neff and Kirkpatrick (2017) [10] established through their study that workplace self-compassion shows a favorable connection to intrinsic work motivation in corporate employees. Terry and Leary (2019) [11] also reported that the self-compassion of corporate persons influenced performance, engagement, and intrinsic motivation. Despite these encouraging findings, the intersection between self-compassion and employee motivation in corporate life still requires more attention. Much of the past research has either concentrated on self-compassion or motivation and not really on the interaction that would affect both employee well-being and performance. This research intends to connect these gaps through an assessment of self-compassion dynamics that affect workplace motivation patterns.

Specifically, this research intends to address the following research questions (RQs):

(RQ1): Investigate how self-compassion correlates with motivations such as intrinsic and extrinsic types among corporate employees.

(RQ2): Explore how self-compassion affects employee motivation across job roles and organizational levels in a corporate setup.

(RQ3): The association between self-compassion and motivation should be examined through job satisfaction, work engagement and perceived stress as possible mediating factors.

(RQ4): Evaluate whether interventions aimed at increasing self-compassion lead to improvements in employee motivation and overall job performance.

The study's objectives would contribute significantly to the growing understanding of self-compassion and motivation in organizations. This investigation produces findings which would impact employee practices and foster development of leadership initiatives and strategic organizational workforce improvements. Furthermore, given the increasing levels of workplace stress and burnout, particularly in light of global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, understanding how self-compassion can boost employee motivation is becoming increasingly important. The study provides important insights which researchers can use to create interventions together with policies for assisting employee health and job performance within a rapidly changing business realm.

2. Methods

2.1 Objective and Study Design

The main goal of this research analyzed the influence that self-compassion plays in employee motivational improvement in modern corporate organizations. This research used an ex post facto design to fulfill its purpose. The research design is appropriate for studying variable relationships at one particular time as it facilitates understanding self-compassion links to various types of workplace motivation.

2.2 Participants

Their sample included 51 corporate respondents from different departments in an organization including human resources, software development, sales management, recruitment, financial administration, and client support. The selection criteria for the sample were purposive sampling for 21 to 51-year employees, particularly from health care, information technology (IT), and finance. The sample consisted of 22 male participants and 29 female participants, of which 39 were married and 12 were not. Ethical issues were maintained through informed consent with the participants and maintaining the secrecy in their responses.

2.3 Materials and Instruments

The study made use of two principal assessment tools:

1. The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) created by Dr. Kristin Neff (2003) [5] evaluates self-compassion through 26 items using a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from Almost Never to Almost Always. The SCS includes six subscales organized under Self-Kindness, Self-Judgment, Common Humanity, Isolation, Mindfulness and Over-identification. The scores and values were solid at 0.92 (Cronbach's alpha). These results were across the whole scale as subscale scores ranged between 0.75 and 0.81.
2. Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS) by Tremblay et al. (2009) [7] uses 18 items to evaluate work-related motivation orientations. The rating system of the measurement tool extends from 1 ('does not correspond at all') through 7 ('corresponds exactly'). The scale comprises six subscales that contain Intrinsic Motivation, Integrated Regulation, Identified Regulation, Introjected Regulation, External Regulation, and Amotivation. The measurement device has reliability scores between 0.60 to 0.84 based on Cronbach's alpha evaluation.

2.4 Data Collection

Participants used Google Forms to submit their responses under conditions of strict security through anonymous entry. The form contained three sections that collected demographic information as well as the Self-Compassion Scale measurements alongside Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale assessments. Each participant could finish the survey during a period of two weeks which they could select according to their schedule. The survey participants who had not responded received reminder emails one week after the initial request.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Google Forms data transferred into Microsoft Excel provided the first stage of data cleaning and organization. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.0, became the tool for performing the data analysis. A calculation of basic statistical values produced information about the survey participants. Self-compassion and different types of motivation showed their relationships by using Pearson's correlation coefficient results. The research adopted independent sample t-tests to evaluate demographic variations between participants through gender and educational levels.

3. Results

A research investigation analyzed how corporate employees relate their motivation to self-compassionate practices. The research results are structured according to each major study objective.

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The research included 51 corporate workers made up of twenty-two males and twenty-nine females who were between twenty-one and sixty years old. Married employees made up 76 percent of the sample group and urban employees made up 75 percent of the participants. The respondents held either bachelor's degrees (53%) or master's degrees (47%) at equal distribution rates.

3.2 Self-Compassion Levels

Most participants scored their self-compassion level at average with 85% while low levels existed among 12% and only 3% had high self-compassionate scores.

3.3 Motivation Levels

The participants showed moderate to high self-determination motivations based on results (67%), along with 23% expressing low to moderate self-determination and 10% showing strong self-determination.

3.4 Relationship between Self-Compassion and Motivation

The study of self-compassion relationships with motivational types used Pearson correlation analyses for its evaluation. The presented data exists in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation between Self-Compassion and Motivation Types

Motivation Types	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Intrinsic Motivation	-0.129	0.368
Integrated Regulation	-0.167	0.242
Identified Regulation	-0.156	0.274
Introjected Regulation	-0.110	0.442
External Regulation	-0.190	0.181
Amotivation	-0.093	0.518

The research findings did not support the prediction because self-compassion showed no significant connection to workplace motivation aspects (all $p > 0.05$). The investigated sample demonstrated insufficient connection between workplace motivational factors and levels of self-compassion.

3.5 Educational Qualification and Motivation

A t-test for independent samples analyzed motivation differences across participants with different qualifications. The data exists in Table 2.

Table 2: Motivation Scores by Educational Qualification

Educational Level	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Bachelor's Degree	27	3.7741	7.11070	1.970	0.055
Master's Degree	24	8.3292	9.35909	1.938	0.059

Note: N = number of participants; SD = standard deviation.

No significant difference was found in motivation levels between employees with bachelor's and master's degrees ($p > 0.05$).

3.6 Educational Qualification and Self-Compassion

A t-test for independent samples analyzed self-compassion differences across participants with different qualifications. The data exists in Table 3.

Table 3: Self-Compassion Scores by Educational Qualification

Educational Level	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Bachelor's Degree	27	3.1223	2.66701	0.544	0.589
Master's Degree	24	2.8243	0.27376	0.577	0.569

A comparison of self-compassion evaluations between bachelor level and master level employees yielded no meaningful statistical difference ($p > 0.05$).

3.7 Key Findings

1. Eighty-five percent of participants showed average scores in self-compassion assessment.
2. Work motivation self-determination levels of most employees fell between moderate through high.
3. Research results rejected the study predictions since self-compassion measurements did not show associations with work motivation types.
4. Workforce members holding bachelor's or master's degrees showed no considerable difference in their motivation levels or self-compassionate behavior.

This sample of corporate employees demonstrates separate entities between self-compassion and work motivation since their relationship remains insignificant. Other workplace determinants seem to play a larger role than self-compassion in motivating employees since these measures show no statistical relationship between the two factors. The test results reveal that corporate employee education level does not affect self-compassion or motivation measurements substantially. These study outcomes question our current understanding of how self-compassion interacts with workplace motivation and show that more investigations are needed to explain the complex psychological phenomenon within business environments.

4. Discussion

The research results from this study generate alternate findings that challenge existing knowledge about self-compassion effects on employee motivation within corporate organizations. Previous studies by Neff and Kirkpatrick (2017) [10] linked self-compassion to positive intrinsic motivation trends but the present research failed to justify these findings.

Leadership approaches and workplace values demonstrate potential reasons behind the observed differences in study findings. Self-compassion serves as a foundation for transformational leadership according to Jasmine et al. (2024) [15] and these insights demonstrate that self-compassion enhances employee motivation and well-being within such leadership environments. Individuals who practice self-compassion gain capabilities to strengthen their transformational leadership abilities especially in emotional resilience and decision-making performance. Research findings from corporate and healthcare settings show that motivated employees with higher job satisfaction appear after self-compassion developments.

Research about imposter syndrome matters, as described by Mathangi et al. (2024) [16]. Employees who deal with perfectionism while experiencing self-doubt tend to avoid hard tasks that limit their performance and motivation levels. The implementation of self-compassionate strategies that foster personal acceptance together with reduced fear of failure enables people to overcome imposter syndrome which then improves their motivation for work and their interactions with colleagues.

The present study did not investigate leadership styles or imposter syndrome influences directly yet both variables help explain how self-compassion affects employee motivation. Future studies should implement these elements to develop better insights about interactions between these constructs in corporate environments.

Research results show that academic qualifications fail to impact significantly on employee motivation or self-compassion levels although they serve as basic psychological drivers. Wong (2022) [14] argues organizational culture and personal experiences create stronger influences than work environment factors when developing self-compassion while determining employee motivation levels.

The outcomes of this study demonstrate why organizations need new approaches to examine the workplace connection between motivation and self-compassion. Integration of leadership approaches with organizational dynamics and workplace-specific elements, including imposter syndrome, can produce a complete understanding of these relationships to develop better methods for employee wellness enhancement and organizational success.

5. Limitations of the Study

The research on imposter syndrome holds value as per Mathangi et al. (2024) [16]. When facing perfectionism with self-doubts personnel make a habit of limiting themselves to tasks which do not push their performance boundaries. The use of self-compassionate strategies promotes personal acceptance and lowers failure anxiety allowing people to fight against imposter syndrome thus strengthening their work motivation and interpersonal relationships at the workplace. This study failed to examine the direct relationship between leader approaches and imposter syndrome waves on motivation among employees yet both areas help explain the influence of self-compassion on motivation at work. Research should integrate these specific elements to uncover better understanding regarding how these constructs influence each other in corporate structures. This research demonstrates that academic background minimally shapes employee motivation together with self-compassion since education establishes itself as a principal factor influencing psychological attributes. Wong (2022) [14] states that personal experiences combined with organizational culture generate more substantial development in self-compassion than factors in the work environment for influencing motivation among employees. Organizations require new methods to research how motivation and self-compassion relate in workplace environments because of these study findings. Leadership approaches together with organizational dynamics and workplace-specific elements including imposter syndrome enable a complete understanding of such relationships to create better improvement methods for enhancing employee wellness and organizational success.

6. Implications of the Study

The research results showed that educational qualifications failed to create substantial changes in motivation and self-compassion as identified by Leary et al. (2007) [6] and Chuang et al. (2024) [17]. Workplace culture and job satisfaction as well as cultural standards have a stronger impact on staff motivation levels than educational qualifications do. This study indicates that greater education levels fail to produce either increased work drive or enhanced self-compassion based on its findings.

Furthermore, the lack of differences in motivation and self-compassion based on education challenges the assumption that higher educational qualifications directly lead to increased workplace motivation. The study demonstrates that organizational policies together with leadership styles play an essential part in motivating employees more than their education levels.

7. Conclusion

This study offers crucial insights into the self-compassion-motivation link in corporate employees, questioning some prior beliefs and stressing a more comprehensive view of well-being and performance. While a direct correlation wasn't found, the research highlights the importance of context and individual differences. The goal of organizationally supported staff motivation highlights the importance of developing a detailed comprehension about self-compassion in leadership behaviors. A holistic approach can help organizations create supportive workplaces, boost employee well-being, and ultimately improve organizational outcomes.

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