

# Assessing Factors Related to College Student Resiliency

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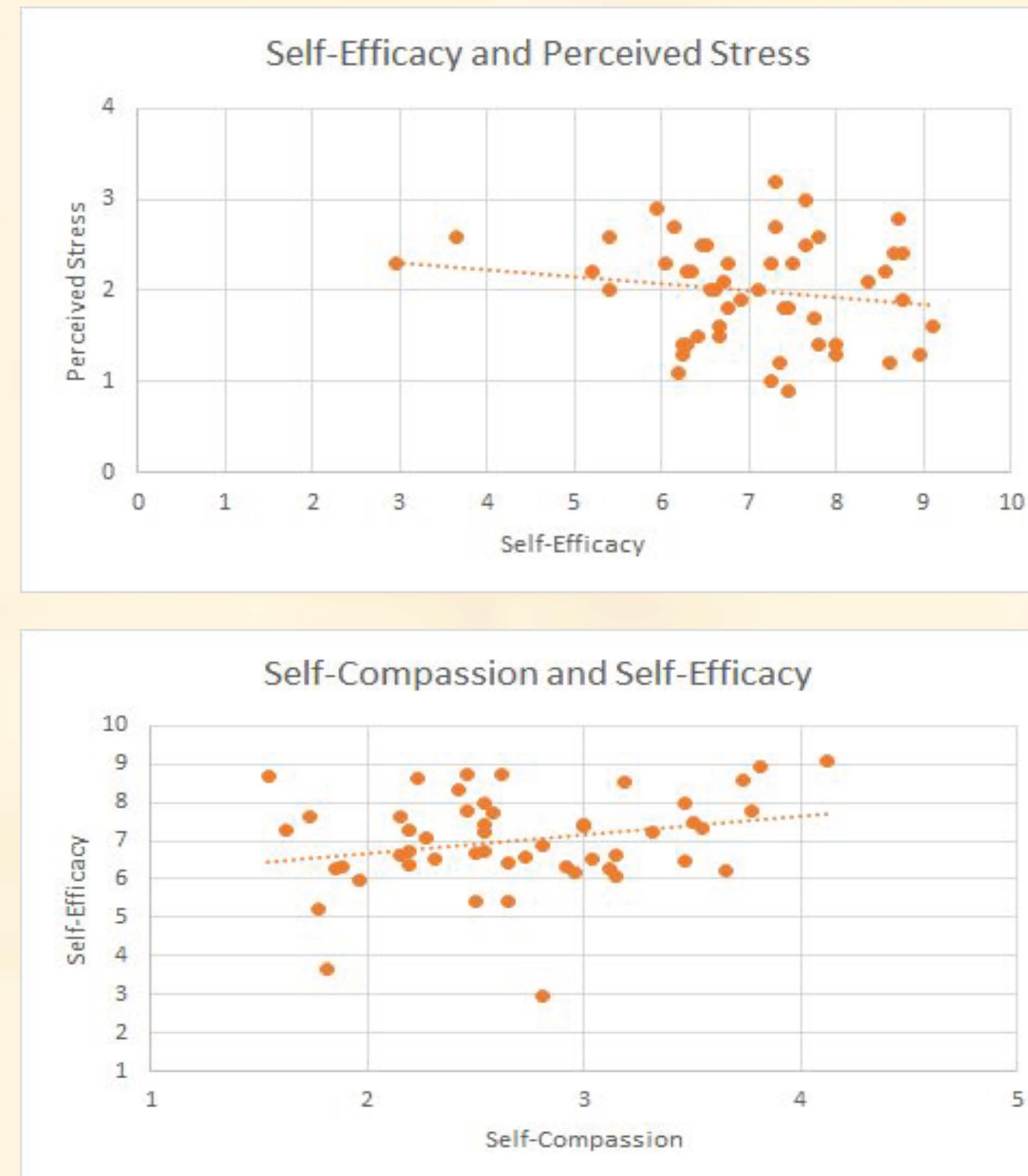
## Background

Self-compassion, composed of mindfulness, common humanity, and self-kindness, refers to how people respond to themselves in moments of distress or suffering (Neff, 2003). Individuals with high self-compassion tend to report greater positive outcomes, such as increased resiliency, happiness, body satisfaction, and optimism (Bluth, Mullarkey, & Lathren, 2018; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff, Hsieh & Dejitthirat, 2005; Neff, Pisitsungkagarn & Hsieh, 2008; Neff, Rude, & Kirkpatrick, 2007). Self-efficacy, a personal, cognitive variable, is defined as one's belief in one's ability to do something (Bandura, 1986). Higher levels of self-efficacy have been associated with academic persistence and academic achievement (Gore, Leuwerke, & Turley, 2006). Research has suggested that self-efficacy and self-compassion are positively correlated with each other (de Houza & Hutz, 2016; Iskender, 2009). The purpose of this project is to investigate how self-compassion and self-efficacy impact the experience of stress and resiliency in the population of incoming college students.

## Hypotheses

Within the self-compassion variable, we hypothesized that those who show higher scores of self-compassion will also show higher scores of resiliency, self-efficacy, and college outcome expectations. Those who show lower scores of self-compassion, will have higher scores of perception of barriers and perceived stress. Within the self-efficacy variable, we hypothesized that higher scores of self-efficacy will show higher scores in resiliency, and college outcome expectations. Those with lower scores of self-efficacy, will display higher scores of perception of barriers and perceived stress.

## Graphs



## Method

Fifty-one first year students were recruited to participate in this study (38 females, 12 males; 36 White, 13 Racial/Ethnic Minority, 1 no response;  $M=18.12$ ,  $SD=.328$ ). Participants were recruited as first year students enrolled in First Year Seminar classes. Participants were informed on the opportunity to complete an online survey consisting of Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, 2003), Brief Resilience Scale (BRS; Smith, Dalen, Wiggins, Tooley, Christopher, & Bernard, 2008), College Self-Efficacy Inventory (CSEI; Solberg, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983), College Outcome Expectations (COE; Flores, 2000), Perceptions of Barriers: Modified Version (POB; Luzzo & McWhirter, 2001), and demographics.

## Results

A correlation test on SPSS was run to measure the variables and their correlations. The following variables have significant positive correlations: self-compassion and resiliency  $\{r(49) = .685, p=.000[\text{SCS-BRS}]\}$ , and self-efficacy and college outcome expectations  $\{r(49) = .333, p=.017[\text{CSEI-COE}]\}$ . We have also found that the following variables have significant negative correlations; self-compassion and perceived stress  $\{r(51) = -.533, p=.000[\text{SCS-PSS}]\}$ , self-compassion and perception of barriers  $\{r(49) = -.374, p=.007[\text{SCS-POB}]\}$ , and self-efficacy and perception of barriers  $\{r(50) = -.400, p=.004[\text{CSEI-POBedu}], r(51) = -.399, p=.004[\text{CSEI-POBcareer}]\}$ .

## Discussion

Results show that self-compassion and self-efficacy have demonstrated a significant relationship to distress, perception of barriers, resiliency, and college outcome expectations. Self-compassion and self-efficacy being positively correlated with resiliency and college outcome expectations respectfully, give support to the idea that people with higher levels of these two traits have a better ability to bounce back during times of hardship and have a better outlook on how college will be. As well as self-compassion having a negative correlation with distress, and self-compassion and self-efficacy, having a negative correlation with perception of barriers, give support to lower feelings of distress as well as having a lower perception of possible barriers standing in the way of one's goal for their education and career. One possible limitation for the study was there was some difficulty in recruiting participants and having them continue with the study, leading to a reduction in power in this study.