

# Impact of Self-Compassion and Experiential Avoidance on the Psychological Well-Being of Chilean Adolescents with High Psychosocial Vulnerability

Jonathan M. Salazar<sup>1,2</sup>, Vanessa Nowak<sup>3</sup>, Aneliz Vargas<sup>4</sup>, Jaime Yáñez<sup>1,2</sup> and Álvaro I. Langer<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Psychology and Humanities Universidad San Sebastián, Valdivia, Chile

<sup>2</sup> Millennium Nucleus for Improving Adolescent and Youth Mental Health, Imhay, Santiago, Chile.

<sup>3</sup> German-Chilean Competence and Development Center

<sup>4</sup> Universidad Austral de Chile, Valdivia, Chile

Poster presented at the X Annual Congress of the Chilean Scientific Society of Psychology, organized by the Universidad de La Frontera, Campus Pucón, Chile, November 13-15, 2024.

The study of psychological well-being (PW) in adolescence is relevant because of its implications on the mental health (MH) of young people. Experiential avoidance (EA), defined as the tendency to avoid contact with painful internal experiences, is a common process in the development and maintenance of various mental health disorders (MH) that has been found to be negatively associated with BP. On the other hand, self-compassion (SC), understood as the ability to be open to one's own suffering with the desire to alleviate it, cultivating an attitude of kindness and understanding in the face of pain, is considered a key psychological strength for BP, and has been positively and significantly associated with BP, and negatively with MHDs. However, these relationships have been little explored in adolescents with high psychosocial vulnerability, a priority population for SM prevention and promotion.

This study aimed to investigate how EE and CS are related to BP in a group of vulnerable adolescents. A cross-sectional, non-experimental correlational study was conducted with a sample of 289 adolescents (13-17 years; 51.7% female) from public schools with high psychosocial vulnerability in a city in southern Chile. Data were collected using standardized instruments: the Experiential Avoidance Scale for Youth (AFQ-Y8), the Brief Self-Compassion Scale (SCS-SF) and the Brief Psychological Well-Being Scale for Youth (PWB-SF-Y). Correlation, multiple regression and mediation analyses were performed to assess the relationships between variables.

The results indicate that both EE and CS are significant predictors of BP. Furthermore, EE partially mediates the relationship between CS and BP ( $B = 0.1390$ ,  $SE = 0.0567$ , 95% CI [0.0312, 0.2507]). These findings highlight the relevance of intervening in EE and fostering CS as strategies to improve BP in vulnerable adolescents. The practical implications of these results are associated in the context of prevention and promotion of mental health in this population.

*Keywords:* self-compassion, psychological well-being, adolescents, experiential avoidance.

---

<sup>1</sup> [alvaro.langer@gmail.com](mailto:alvaro.langer@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> This poster was funded by the Fondo Nacional de Desarrollo Científico y Tecnológico de la Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo de Chile (ANID), Fondecyt Regular (Project Number 12210304) and ANID - Millennium Science Initiative Program - NCS2021\_081.