

## Caught Between Delay and Distress: Examining the Role of Self-Compassion in the Relationship between Procrastination and Academic Stress among Migrant Students

### Terjebak antara Penundaan dan Tekanan: Mengkaji Peran Self-Compassion dalam Hubungan antara Prokrastinasi dan Stres Akademik pada Mahasiswa Migran

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#### ABSTRACT

Higher education in Indonesia provides opportunities for personal and academic development, yet migrant students often face complex challenges, including adapting to new social and academic environments, managing independent living, and meeting high academic demands, which can lead to procrastination and increased academic stress. This study examined the relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress among migrant university students, with self-compassion as a mediating variable. A quantitative correlational design with mediation analysis was employed, involving 140 migrant students who completed online self-report questionnaires measuring academic procrastination, academic stress, and self-compassion. Mediation analysis using JASP 18.3 and bootstrapping showed that academic procrastination had a significant positive effect on academic stress (estimate = 0.338,  $p < .001$ ), while self-compassion partially mediated this relationship, reducing the stress associated with procrastination (indirect effect = 0.084,  $p = 0.005$ ). The total effect of procrastination on stress was also significant (estimate = 0.442,  $p < .001$ ). These results indicate that self-compassion acts as a protective factor, helping migrant students cope with the psychological burden of procrastination. Interventions aimed at fostering self-compassion may therefore enhance emotional well-being, academic adjustment, and resilience, supporting students in managing academic challenges and promoting success in higher education contexts.

#### ABSTRAK

Pendidikan tinggi di Indonesia memberikan peluang untuk pengembangan pribadi dan akademik. Namun, mahasiswa migran sering menghadapi tantangan yang kompleks, termasuk beradaptasi dengan lingkungan sosial dan akademik yang baru, mengelola kehidupan mandiri, serta memenuhi tuntutan akademik yang tinggi, yang dapat menyebabkan prokrastinasi dan meningkatnya stres akademik. Penelitian ini mengkaji hubungan antara prokrastinasi akademik dan stres akademik pada mahasiswa migran, dengan self-compassion sebagai variabel mediasi. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif korelasional dengan analisis mediasi, melibatkan 140 mahasiswa migran yang mengisi kuesioner daring berbasis self-report untuk mengukur prokrastinasi akademik, stres akademik, dan self-compassion. Analisis mediasi menggunakan JASP 18.3 dan teknik bootstrapping menunjukkan bahwa prokrastinasi akademik memiliki pengaruh positif yang signifikan terhadap stres akademik (estimate = 0,338,  $p < 0,001$ ), sementara self-compassion memediasi secara parsial hubungan tersebut dengan menurunkan tingkat stres yang terkait dengan prokrastinasi (indirect effect = 0,084,  $p = 0,005$ ). Pengaruh total prokrastinasi terhadap stres juga signifikan (estimate = 0,442,  $p < 0,001$ ). Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa self-compassion berperan sebagai faktor protektif yang membantu mahasiswa migran mengatasi beban psikologis akibat prokrastinasi. Oleh karena itu, intervensi yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan self-compassion dapat memperkuat kesejahteraan emosional, penyesuaian akademik, dan resiliensi, sehingga mendukung mahasiswa dalam menghadapi tantangan akademik dan mencapai keberhasilan di pendidikan tinggi.

#### Kata Kunci:

Penundaan Akademik, Stres Akademik, Rasa Sayang pada Diri Sendiri, Mahasiswa Migran, Kesejahteraan Emosional

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## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions in Indonesia have experienced significant growth over the past decades, reflecting the increasing public awareness of the importance of higher education as a means of personal and societal advancement (Marfuatunnisa & Sandjaja, 2023). The expansion of universities, both public and private, across various regions demonstrates that higher education occupies a strategic position in preparing qualified, competitive, and adaptable human resources capable of responding to the demands of a rapidly changing global environment (Lee & Lee, 2022). Universities are no longer viewed solely as centers for the transmission of academic knowledge, but also as dynamic spaces that facilitate intellectual development, character building, and the cultivation of essential life skills. Within this context, higher education serves as a crucial foundation for shaping individuals who are not only academically competent but also socially responsible and professionally prepared (Lastary & Rahayu, 2018).

In the university setting, students are provided with opportunities to explore and develop their potential in a holistic manner through formal learning, extracurricular activities, and social interactions (Kalizta et al., 2026). The learning process encourages students to engage in critical and analytical thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning, which are essential competencies in both academic and professional contexts (Laia et al., 2022). Moreover, higher education fosters personal growth by promoting values such as self-discipline, responsibility, resilience, and ethical awareness. As students progress through their academic journey, they are gradually guided to take ownership of their educational paths and future careers, enabling them to make informed decisions and adapt to challenges they may encounter beyond graduation (Kurtovic et al., 2019).

Despite the wide availability of higher education institutions, the process of choosing a university is a complex decision influenced by multiple interrelated factors. Prospective students often consider the quality of facilities, the reputation and accreditation of the institution, the relevance and excellence of academic programs, the learning environment, and the track record of alumni success in the labor market (Khumas et al., 2019). These considerations reflect students' and families' expectations that higher education will provide not only academic credentials but also meaningful opportunities for career development and social mobility. Consequently, differences in perceived quality among universities intensify competition, both among institutions seeking to attract students and among students striving to gain admission to reputable universities (Khumas et al., 2019).

This competitive landscape encourages many individuals to pursue higher education outside their hometowns in order to access institutions believed to offer better educational quality, resources, and future prospects. Students who leave their place of origin for educational purposes are commonly referred to as migrant students. The

decision to migrate for higher education is often motivated by the desire to gain broader academic exposure, diverse social experiences, and expanded personal networks (Kamarulzaman, 2022). However, this decision also requires psychological and emotional readiness, as migrant students must adapt to new academic cultures, social environments, and living conditions. While these challenges can be demanding, they also provide valuable opportunities for personal maturity, independence, and self-development, which are integral aspects of the higher education experience (Juniasi & Huwae, 2023).

Becoming a migrant student is a complex and demanding transition that requires individuals to adjust to multiple changes simultaneously. Migrant students are not only expected to adapt to a new academic environment but also to unfamiliar social and cultural contexts that differ from those of their hometowns. Environmental changes such as living in a new city, different climates, and unfamiliar daily routines can create a sense of uncertainty and discomfort (Hidayati & Harsono, 2021). At the same time, physical distance from family and close social support systems often intensifies feelings of loneliness and emotional vulnerability. These conditions place migrant students in situations where they must develop independence more rapidly, which can become a significant source of psychological pressure (Handayani & Nirmalasari, 2020).

One of the most common emotional challenges faced by migrant students is homesickness, characterized by longing for family, familiar surroundings, and established social relationships. This emotional response may be accompanied by anxiety, stress, or feelings of isolation, particularly during the early stages of adaptation. Difficulties in building new social relationships further complicate this process, as migrant students may struggle to find peers with similar backgrounds or experiences (Gold & Wegner, 199 C.E.). Differences in communication styles, local customs, and cultural values can contribute to misunderstandings and feelings of incompatibility, which may hinder social integration. Over time, these challenges can negatively affect psychological well-being if not managed effectively (Giyati & Whibowo, 2023).

In addition to social and cultural adjustments, migrant students must adapt to living without the direct supervision and support of their parents. This transition requires them to manage various aspects of daily life independently, including financial management, time organization, and personal decision-making (Gatari, 2020). Migrant students are also expected to understand and comply with new social norms within their academic and residential environments, which may differ significantly from those they were accustomed to. Establishing new social networks becomes an essential task, as peer support plays a crucial role in helping students cope with stress and maintain emotional stability during their adaptation process (Gadzella, 1994).

Academic adjustment represents another major challenge for migrant students, as higher education demands

are often more complex and intensive than previous educational experiences. Migrant students must cope with heavy academic workloads, higher expectations for independent learning, and increased competition among peers. The pressure to maintain satisfactory academic performance is often heightened by the desire to justify their decision to study away from home and to meet personal or family expectations (Fitria & Arifudin, 2020). Balancing academic responsibilities with the demands of independent living can be overwhelming, particularly when students lack effective coping strategies. Consequently, the accumulation of social, emotional, and academic challenges highlights the need for strong personal resilience and adequate support systems to ensure migrant students' successful adaptation and well-being (Febriyant & Soetjningsih, 2023).

Academic pressure among migrant students also emerges from the continuous demands of exam preparation, practical coursework, and the obligation to achieve academic outcomes that may not always align with personal expectations (Fauzia et al., 2021). The intensity of assessments in higher education requires sustained concentration, effective time management, and consistent academic engagement, which can be particularly challenging for students who are still adjusting to a new learning environment. When examination results or course performances fall short of expectations, students may experience disappointment, self-doubt, and heightened anxiety. These academic pressures often accumulate over time, contributing to emotional fatigue and reduced academic confidence (Erwansa et al., 2024).

In addition to institutional demands, psychological pressure is frequently intensified by high expectations from parents and family members in students' hometowns. Many migrant students feel a strong sense of responsibility to succeed academically as a form of accountability for the sacrifices made by their families (Erindana et al., 2021). This perceived obligation can create internal pressure to perform well, even when students are struggling to adapt. Academic difficulties become more pronounced when students begin to feel incompetent in completing assignments, lose motivation to learn, or encounter challenges in understanding lecturers' explanations. Such experiences may lead to feelings of frustration and helplessness, particularly when students lack adequate academic support (Breines & Chen, 2012).

Differences in academic terminology, instructional methods, and teaching styles between previous educational experiences and university learning environments further complicate the adaptation process. Lecturers may employ fast-paced explanations, independent learning approaches, or unfamiliar assessment systems that require students to adjust their learning strategies (Barseli et al., 2017). For migrant students, these differences can create confusion and increase the risk of misunderstanding course materials, ultimately affecting academic performance. Without sufficient guidance, students may struggle to bridge these

gaps, which can negatively impact both academic outcomes and self-efficacy (Balan et al., 2023).

Unpreparedness in facing academic realities that differ from initial expectations often leads to psychological distress. Many students enter higher education with idealized perceptions of university life, only to encounter demanding workloads and competitive academic climates. The discrepancy between expectations and actual experiences can be overwhelming, triggering academic stress and emotional strain (Azra, 2022). Academic stress is a common phenomenon among university students, regardless of their level of achievement, as concerns about grades, timely graduation, and overall academic success persist throughout the study period. When left unaddressed, this ongoing stress may interfere with students' mental well-being and academic persistence, highlighting the importance of effective coping strategies and institutional support systems (Anju et al., 2021).

Beyond academic demands, university students are increasingly expected to demonstrate a wide range of competencies that extend beyond cognitive achievement. In addition to mastering subject-specific knowledge, students are required to possess technical and digital skills, critical and analytical thinking abilities, strong character, and positive personality traits that support collaboration and adaptability (Anggawijaya, 2014). These multidimensional expectations significantly increase the complexity of the student role, as individuals must simultaneously manage academic responsibilities, personal development, and social expectations. As a result, academic stress often emerges from the accumulation of excessive assignments, overlapping responsibilities, and strict deadlines that leave students with limited time for rest and recovery. Furthermore, continuous expectations from lecturers, institutions, families, and peers to maintain high levels of performance can intensify the psychological pressure experienced by students (Allen & Leary, 2023).

Prolonged exposure to academic stress has far-reaching consequences that extend beyond academic outcomes. While academic performance may decline due to difficulties in maintaining focus and consistency, the impact of stress is also evident in students' physical health, emotional well-being, and daily behavior (Akanpaadgi et al., 2023). High levels of academic stress can reduce the quality of learning by weakening memory retention, impairing concentration, and diminishing motivation to actively participate in academic activities. In some cases, students become disengaged from their studies, demonstrating reduced effort and involvement in coursework. These academic difficulties are often accompanied by physical symptoms, as stress negatively affects sleep quality, immune functioning, and overall physical condition (Agustina & Deastuti, 2023).

Sleep disturbances are among the most common consequences of excessive academic pressure, as students may experience difficulty falling asleep, frequent awakenings, or insufficient sleep duration. Poor sleep quality

further exacerbates academic challenges by reducing concentration, decision-making ability, and emotional regulation (Zhou et al., 2023). Additionally, prolonged stress may lead to changes in appetite, fatigue, and somatic complaints, all of which interfere with students' capacity to function effectively in both academic and non-academic settings. Over time, the cumulative effects of academic stress can create a cycle in which declining well-being further impairs academic performance, thereby increasing stress levels (Zhang et al., 2023).

First-year students, particularly those who migrate for educational purposes, are especially vulnerable to academic stress due to their limited experience in managing the demands of higher education. Inadequate adjustment processes often make it difficult for them to organize time effectively, maintain learning focus, and cope with increasing academic expectations (Febriyant & Soetjningsih, 2023). One significant factor that contributes to academic stress among students is procrastination behavior, which involves the tendency to delay completing academic tasks until deadlines are imminent. Procrastination often leads to the accumulation of unfinished assignments that must be completed within a short period, creating feelings of pressure, urgency, and overwhelm (Fauzia et al., 2021).

As deadlines approach, the consequences of procrastination become more pronounced, as students are forced to work under intense time constraints. This situation not only increases academic stress but also reduces productivity and the quality of academic output (Febriyant & Soetjningsih, 2023). Repeated patterns of procrastination are associated with heightened anxiety, emotional distress, and negative self-evaluations, which further undermine students' academic confidence. Ultimately, the interaction between high academic demands, insufficient adjustment, and maladaptive coping behaviors such as procrastination highlights the need for effective self-regulation strategies and supportive academic environments to reduce stress and promote student well-being (Fitria & Arifudin, 2020).

Migrant students may be particularly susceptible to procrastination because they often face reduced parental supervision and must navigate the challenges of managing both academic and non-academic responsibilities independently. Without the immediate guidance or reminders from family, these students bear full responsibility for organizing their time, setting priorities, and maintaining consistent study habits (Febriyant & Soetjningsih, 2023). The demands of adjusting to a new environment, coupled with the desire to engage in social interactions or participate in extracurricular organizations, can further distract them from academic responsibilities. As a result, maintaining a proper balance between academic tasks and other commitments becomes increasingly difficult, making procrastination a common coping pattern. Poor time management emerges as a central trigger of procrastination, as students struggle to allocate sufficient attention to academic tasks while simultaneously engaging in social, organizational, or personal activities (Fitria & Arifudin, 2020).

The consequences of uncontrolled procrastination can be significant, directly impacting academic success and overall well-being. When students habitually delay completing assignments, they risk missing deadlines, producing lower-quality work, or even facing academic failure. Procrastination not only affects immediate academic performance but also creates a cumulative effect, increasing stress as pending tasks accumulate and deadlines loom (Gadzella, 1994).

Based on the background described above, this study aims to examine the relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress among migrant students and to analyze the mediating role of self-compassion in this relationship. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of self-compassion as a protective psychological mechanism that explains how procrastination not only directly influences academic stress but can also be managed through individuals' ability to treat themselves with kindness, particularly within the underexplored context of migrant students in Indonesia. In addition, this study strengthens the mediation approach by employing bootstrapping techniques to produce more robust and accurate estimates. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the field of educational psychology, especially in understanding self-regulation and psychological well-being among university students, as well as practical implications for developing self-compassion-based interventions to help migrant students reduce academic stress, improve adjustment, and achieve academic success more effectively.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design and mediation analysis to examine the relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress among migrant university students, with self-compassion serving as a mediating variable. This approach was selected to provide empirical insight into the psychological role of self-compassion in explaining how procrastination relates to academic stress. Data were collected online using self-report questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, allowing for efficient access to participants from various regions. Before participation, all respondents provided informed consent, and confidentiality was ensured, with all data used solely for research purposes.

The population of this study consisted of university students in Indonesia who were pursuing higher education outside their home regions (migrant students). However, there is no precise national data representing the total number of migrant students in Indonesia due to data limitations. Therefore, the study applied purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria were students aged 18–25 years who were currently enrolled in higher education institutions outside their city or region of origin. Based on the calculation using Cochran's formula, the minimum required sample size was 97 participants. This study successfully obtained 140

participants, exceeding the minimum requirement, thus strengthening the statistical power of the analysis.

The study involved three main variables: academic procrastination, academic stress, and self-compassion, each operationalized through standardized psychological scales. Academic procrastination was measured using a scale developed by McCloskey and Scielzo (2015), consisting of 25 items covering dimensions such as psychological beliefs, time management, distractions, social factors, initiative, and laziness. Academic stress was measured using a modified version of the Student-Life Stress Inventory by Gadzella (1994), adapted into 23 items focusing on academic stressors including frustration, conflict, pressure, change, and self-imposed demands. Self-compassion was assessed using Neff's (2003) Self-Compassion Scale, consisting of 26 items measuring self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, along with their opposing dimensions. All instruments used Likert-type response formats.

The reliability testing results indicated that all instruments demonstrated good internal consistency. The

academic procrastination scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.901, the academic stress scale showed 0.866, and the self-compassion scale produced 0.857, confirming that the instruments were reliable for measuring the constructs in this study.

Data analysis was conducted using a bootstrapping technique with 1,000 resamples and a 95% confidence interval to test the mediating role of self-compassion. This method was chosen due to its robustness in handling smaller sample sizes and its minimal reliance on normality assumptions. Before analysis, negatively worded items were reverse-scored to ensure consistency. Through this analytical approach, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive and statistically robust understanding of the relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress, as well as the mediating role of self-compassion among migrant university students..

## RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristic Respondence

Gender	N	Percentage
Women	115	82.1%
Male	25	17.9%
Total	140	100%
Age of Participants	N	Percentage
18 Years	3	2,1%
19 Years	7	5%
20 Years	18	12,9%
21 Years	55	39,3%
22 Years	37	26,4%
23 Years	13	9,3%
24 Years	4	2,9%
25 Years	3	2,1%
Total	140	100%
Frequency of Wandering	N	Percentage
Less than 1 year	10	7,1%
1 Year	12	8,6%
2 Years	32	22,9%
3 Years	40	28,6%
More than 3 Years	46	32,9%
Total	140	100%
Residence	N	Percentage
Rent Cost	121	86.4%
With Family/Relatives/Relatives	19	13.6%
Total	140	100%
Frequency of Communication in a Month	N	Percentage
1-2 Times per month	18	12,9%
3-4 Times per month	23	16,4%
5-6 Times per month	19	13,6%
More than 6 times per month	80	57,1%
Total	140	100%

The demographic profile of the participants shows that the sample was predominantly female, with 115

participants (82.1%), compared to 25 males (17.9%). Most participants were in early adulthood, with the largest age

group being 21 years old (39.3%), followed by 22 years (26.4%), indicating that the majority were in the middle stage of their undergraduate studies. In terms of migration experience, most students had been living away from home for more than three years (32.9%) or three years (28.6%), suggesting relatively high adaptation exposure. The majority of participants lived independently in rented accommodations

or boarding houses (86.4%), while a smaller proportion lived with family or relatives (13.6%). Additionally, communication patterns with family were relatively frequent, with more than half of the participants (57.1%) reporting communicating more than six times per month, indicating that despite living away, students tended to maintain regular contact with their support systems.

**Table 2. Descriptive Test**

Variable	Empirical				Hypothetical			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Academic Procrastination	95	146	125,95	7,014	50	200	125	25
Academic Stress	87	108	97,15	6,129	45	187	102	19
Self-Compassion	74	97	85,83	4,573	34	136	85	17

The descriptive test results show that academic procrastination scores ranged from 95 to 146, with an empirical mean of 125.95 and a standard deviation of 7.014, which is very close to the hypothetical mean of 125, indicating a moderate level of procrastination among participants. Academic stress scores ranged from 87 to 108, with an empirical mean of 97.15 and a standard deviation of 6.129, slightly below the hypothetical mean of 102, suggesting a

relatively moderate tendency toward lower stress levels. Meanwhile, self-compassion scores ranged from 74 to 97, with an empirical mean of 85.83 and a standard deviation of 4.573, closely aligning with the hypothetical mean of 85, indicating that participants generally demonstrate a moderate level of self-compassion. Overall, the findings suggest that all variables tend to be distributed around the moderate range, with slight variations across constructs.

**Table 3. Academic Procrastination Score Categories**

Guidelines	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$X < 68$	Low	26	26.80%
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$68 \leq X < 102$	Keep	56	57.73%
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X \geq 102$	Tall	15	15.46%
<b>Total</b>			<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>

The categorization of academic procrastination scores shows that the majority of participants fall within the moderate category, with 56 students (57.73%) scoring between 68 and 102. Meanwhile, 26 students (26.80%) are classified in the low category, indicating relatively lower levels of procrastination. A smaller proportion, 15 students

(15.46%), fall into the high category, with scores equal to or above 102. Overall, these findings suggest that most participants exhibit a moderate tendency toward academic procrastination, with fewer individuals demonstrating either very low or very high levels.

**Table 4. Categories of Academic Stress**

Guidelines	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$X < 100$	Low	15	0,5%
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$100 \leq X < 150$	Keep	37	99,5%
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X \geq 150$	Tall	45	0%
<b>Total</b>			<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>

The categorization of academic stress indicates that the largest proportion of participants falls into the high category, with 45 students (46.39%) scoring 150 or above. This is followed by 37 students (38.14%) in the moderate category, with scores between 100 and 150. Meanwhile, a

smaller proportion, 15 students (15.46%), fall into the low category, with scores below 100. Overall, these findings suggest that a considerable number of participants experience high levels of academic stress, although a substantial portion remains within the moderate range.

**Table 5. Categories of Self-Compassion**

Guidelines	Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
$X < (\mu - 1\sigma)$	$X < 100$	Low	34	35.05%
$(\mu - 1\sigma) \leq X < (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$100 \leq X < 150$	Keep	50	51.55%
$X \geq (\mu + 1\sigma)$	$X \geq 150$	Tall	13	13.40%
<b>Total</b>			<b>97</b>	<b>100%</b>

The categorization results show that the majority of participants fall within the moderate category, with 50 students (51.55%) scoring between 100 and 150. Meanwhile, 34 students (35.05%) are classified in the low category, indicating relatively lower levels. A smaller proportion, 13

students (13.40%), fall into the high category, with scores equal to or above 150. Overall, these findings suggest that most participants exhibit moderate levels, with a considerable portion still in the low category and fewer individuals in the high category.

**Table 6. Normality Test Results**

Variable	SD	KS-Z	Sig.	P	Information
Academic Procrastination	7,014	0,057	0,200	P>0.05	Usual
Academic Stress	6,219	0,028	0,200	P>0.05	Usual
Self-Compassion	4,573	0,058	0,200	P>0.05	Usual

The normality test results indicate that all variables are normally distributed. Academic procrastination (SD = 7.014) obtained a KS-Z value of 0.057 with a significance level of 0.200 ( $p > 0.05$ ), academic stress (SD = 6.219) showed a KS-Z value of 0.028 with a significance of 0.200 ( $p > 0.05$ ), and self-compassion (SD = 4.573) yielded a KS-Z value of 0.058

with a significance of 0.200 ( $p > 0.05$ ). Since all significance values exceed 0.05, it can be concluded that the data for each variable meet the assumption of normality, indicating that the distributions are normal and suitable for further parametric statistical analysis.

**Table 7. Mediation Estimation Coefficient**

Effect	Variable	Estimate	Std. error	z-value	p
Straight	NOT → SAS	0.338	0.054	6.290	<.001
Indirect	PAS → SCS → SAS	0.084	0.030	2.823	0.005
Total	PAS → SAS	0.442	0.058	7.261	<.001

Hypothesis testing was conducted using mediation analysis with the assistance of JASP version 18.3. The results presented a strong direct effect of academic procrastination (PAS) on academic stress (SAS), with an estimated coefficient of 0.338, a standard error of 0.054, a z-value of 6.290, and a statistically significant p-value of <.001, confirming that higher levels of procrastination are directly associated with increased academic stress. Furthermore, self-compassion (SCS) was found to partially mediate this relationship, as indicated by an indirect effect estimate of 0.084, a standard error of 0.030, a z-value of 2.823, and a p-

value of 0.005, suggesting that students with higher self-compassion are able to buffer some of the stress associated with procrastination. The total effect of academic procrastination on academic stress, combining both direct and indirect pathways, was 0.442, with a standard error of 0.058, a z-value of 7.261, and a p-value <.001, demonstrating that the overall relationship is statistically significant. These findings highlight the important role of self-compassion as a protective factor that can reduce, but not completely eliminate, the impact of academic procrastination on stress levels.

**Table 8. Estimated Path**

Variable	Pathway	Estimate	Std. error	z-value	p
SCS → SAS	a	-0.402	0.067	-5.971	<.001
NOT → SAS	b	0.338	0.054	6.290	<.001
NOT → SCS	c	-0.208	0.065	-3.204	0.001

The estimated pathways among the variables highlight both direct and mediated relationships through self-compassion. Path **a** indicates that self-compassion (SCS) has a significant negative effect on academic stress (SAS), with an estimate of -0.402, a standard error of 0.067, a z-value of -5.971, and a p-value <.001, showing that higher self-compassion is associated with lower academic stress. Path **b** shows that academic procrastination (PAS) has a significant positive effect on academic stress, with an estimate of 0.338, a standard error of 0.054, a z-value of 6.290, and a p-value <.001, indicating that higher procrastination increases stress levels. Path **c** demonstrates a significant negative relationship between academic procrastination and self-compassion (estimate = -0.208, standard error = 0.065, z = -

3.204,  $p = 0.001$ ), suggesting that higher procrastination is associated with lower self-compassion.

In addition to these direct effects, an indirect effect of academic procrastination on academic stress occurs through self-compassion as a mediator. This indicates that self-compassion partially mediates the relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress among migrant students. In other words, while procrastination directly increases stress, part of its effect is transmitted through its negative impact on self-compassion, which in turn influences stress levels. Based on these results, it can be concluded that self-compassion acts as a protective factor that mitigates, but does not eliminate, the stress associated with academic procrastination, thereby supporting the acceptance of Hypothesis 1.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis indicate a significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress, showing that procrastination directly contributes to the level of stress experienced by students. This finding aligns with prior research, which consistently demonstrates that procrastination behaviors are a key predictor of academic stress among university students (Kalizta et al., 2026). Procrastination among students, particularly those from regional or migrant backgrounds, can arise from a variety of factors. Differences in individual academic demands, the accumulation of pending tasks, and the tendency to postpone work until deadlines approach all contribute to this behavior (Firnando & Suhesty, 2024). Additionally, students may divert their attention to more pleasurable activities, such as socializing with friends or engaging in non-academic pursuits, rather than completing assignments (Marfuatunnisa & Sandjaja, 2023).

Lee and Lee (2022) further emphasizes that habitual academic procrastination can lead to excessive anxiety and prolonged academic stress, which in severe cases may escalate to depression and disrupt students' ability to lead productive academic lives. For regional or migrant students, who must simultaneously adapt to new social and academic environments, the impact of procrastination can be particularly pronounced. The pressure of managing independent living, meeting academic requirements, and balancing social activities may increase the likelihood of postponing tasks, thereby intensifying stress levels. Consequently, academic procrastination not only affects academic performance but also has broader implications for students' mental health and overall well-being (Lastary & Rahayu, 2018).

The results of the data analysis indicate that self-compassion serves as a partial mediator between academic procrastination and academic stress. This suggests that students' ability to treat themselves with understanding, patience, and kindness can influence the extent to which procrastination leads to stress. These findings are consistent with the research of Laia et al. (2022) which demonstrates that individuals with lower levels of self-compassion are more likely to experience higher stress as a result of procrastination. In other words, self-compassion helps explain why some students are more resilient in the face of delayed tasks, while those who lack self-compassion may respond to procrastination with heightened stress and self-criticism (Kurtovic et al., 2019).

Procrastination behavior among students is often rooted in a combination of laziness, underestimating the complexity of tasks, and experiencing obstacles that make it difficult to understand or complete assignments (Khumas et al., 2019). These challenges can create a sense of inadequacy or self-doubt, causing students to feel incapable of completing their responsibilities. As a result, students may avoid or postpone tasks, which further reinforces negative feelings about their abilities. When students encounter repeated difficulties without effective coping strategies,

their confidence in handling academic demands decreases, making them more prone to stress (Kamarulzaman, 2022).

High and unrealistic standards are another factor that can contribute to procrastination, as noted by (Karim, 2020). Students or individuals who set excessively high expectations for their performance may delay tasks due to dissatisfaction with the quality of work they produce or a fear of making mistakes that could result in negative judgments from others. This perfectionistic tendency can create a cycle in which the fear of imperfection leads to avoidance, further delaying task completion and increasing stress levels. (Juniasi & Huwae, 2023) adds that individuals who are aware of their procrastination often experience a range of negative emotions, including guilt, feelings of deceit, self-condemnation, anxiety, panic, and inferiority. These emotional responses not only reduce motivation but also exacerbate psychological strain, making it more difficult for individuals to engage with their tasks effectively.

In this context, self-compassion emerges as a vital psychological resource for managing procrastination and its associated stress. Self-compassion involves treating oneself with kindness, understanding, and acceptance when facing difficulties, challenges, or failures, rather than responding with harsh self-criticism (Hidayati & Harsono, 2021). By cultivating self-compassion, individuals can acknowledge their struggles without judgment, recognize that difficulties are a normal part of human experience, and respond to setbacks with patience and support for themselves. This mindset allows students to reduce the emotional burden of procrastination, maintain motivation, and approach academic or personal challenges with a more balanced and constructive perspective (Handayani & Nirmalasari, 2020).

Self-compassion plays a crucial role in mitigating the negative effects of stressful or challenging events by helping individuals reduce excessive self-blame and harsh self-criticism (Gold & Wegner, 199 C.E.). When students or individuals face failure or setbacks, those with higher levels of self-compassion can view these experiences not as personal deficiencies, but as opportunities for growth and learning. According to Giyati and Whibowo (2023) self-compassion encourages individuals to focus on completing their tasks and responsibilities without being overwhelmed by guilt or regret, fostering a more constructive and proactive approach to challenges.

Beyond its academic implications, self-compassion also supports the development of self-care practices and encourages individuals to perceive problems as a natural part of human life. By cultivating self-empathy, students can strengthen their psychological resilience, allowing them to better cope with feelings of anxiety, fear, or even depression. This emotional support system within oneself promotes greater emotional stability, helping students navigate the pressures of academic and personal life more effectively. Research by Gadzella (1994) highlights that self-compassion not only alleviates negative emotions but also enhances a sense of inner comfort and personal well-being, creating a

foundation for healthier coping mechanisms and more balanced emotional responses (Fitria & Arifudin, 2020).

When a person possesses high self-compassion, they are more likely to engage in emotion-focused coping strategies, such as accepting the reality of negative events and releasing rather than suppressing negative feelings (Febriyant & Soetjningsih, 2023). This approach allows individuals to protect themselves from the harmful effects of stress, avoid excessive self-criticism, and maintain hope and motivation to overcome difficulties (Fauzia et al., 2021). Self-compassion encourages a balanced perspective in which individuals acknowledge their challenges without letting them define their self-worth, fostering emotional resilience and adaptive coping behaviors.

Erwansa et al. (2024) explain that individuals with self-compassion treat themselves with kindness and understanding, accept their imperfections, and avoid engaging in self-destructive behavior. Similarly, Erindana et al. (2021) notes that highly self-compassionate individuals are able to view negative experiences objectively and are less likely to compare themselves harshly to others or engage in excessive self-blame. Barseli et al. (2017) further highlight that self-compassion helps reduce excessive emotional reactions and negative feelings, enabling individuals to better manage challenges and maintain lower levels of stress.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that academic procrastination has a significant positive effect on academic stress among migrant university students, and self-compassion partially mediates this relationship, serving as a protective factor that helps reduce the psychological impact of procrastination. For future research, it is recommended to explore additional psychological or environmental variables, such as time management skills, social support, or resilience, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of factors that influence academic stress in migrant students. The findings of this study imply that developing interventions aimed at enhancing self-compassion could be an effective strategy for universities to support students' emotional well-being, improve academic adjustment, and foster resilience, thereby promoting both personal and academic success in higher education settings.

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### ETHICAL APPROVAL

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of psychological research involving human

participants. Before data collection, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, confidentiality of their responses, voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before completing the questionnaire.

### DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

### TRANSPARENCY OF DATA

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Participant confidentiality and anonymity have been maintained in accordance with ethical research standards.

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### AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Izza Ardelia Yudhistira: Conceptualization, literature review, methodology, data collection, interpretation of findings, writing – original draft preparation  
Meilani Sandjaja: Formal analysis and manuscript revision.

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