

Self-Compassion, Compassion, and Gratitude in Crisis Line Volunteers

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Summary of B.Sc. Thesis

Background

Crisis line services have been an essential resource for people that struggle with their mental health for years. Crisis line volunteers can add to a stranger's mental well-being, however, what is known about characteristics that can help crisis line workers to cope with their demanding job? It is important to find factors that may help them deal with the stressors their job poses to ensure that the mental health of crisis line volunteers is not neglected. Research has shown that self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude can enhance life satisfaction and that these concepts are connected.

Aim

Previous research has not been able yet to explain how self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude are related to one another in the context of crisis line volunteers. This research aimed to understand how these concepts are connected in regard to crisis line volunteers and whether gratitude moderated the relationship between self-compassion and compassion.

Methods

A total of 593 participants (*Mean Age* = 60.9, *SD* = 13.2) were recruited from three different crisis line services in the Netherlands to take part in an online survey. The questionnaire included the Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form, the Compassionate Engagement and Action Scales, and the Gratitude Questionnaire-Six Item Form. The Kruskal-Wallis H Test was used to compare subgroups, and Spearman's Rho Correlation was used to calculate associations between socio-demographic and work-related variables and self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude. Furthermore, correlations between self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude were estimated by calculating the Pearson Correlation. To examine if gratitude moderated the relationship between self-compassion and compassion in crisis line volunteers, a moderation analysis was used.

Results

Pearson correlations revealed that self-compassion is significantly but weakly related to compassion ($r = .13, p = .001$). A significant moderate correlation was established between self-compassion and gratitude ($r = .32, p = .000$) and compassion and gratitude ($r = .31, p = .000$). However, no significant moderation effect could be established ($R^2\text{-change} = .0007, F(1,589) = .46, p = .493$).

Conclusion

The current study could not establish gratitude as a moderating factor for the relationship between self-compassion and compassion, however, significant relations were found between these variables. Additionally, it was established that certain socio-demographic and work-related variables influence self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude in crisis line volunteers. It was also found that self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude levels were rather high in the study population, which leads to the conclusion that these characteristics might be essential for crisis line volunteers. As self-compassion, compassion, and gratitude seem to be very important for crisis line volunteers, further research is needed to understand what influences these variables and what might enhance them, as they can be contributing factors to the mental well-being of crisis line volunteers.