

ATTACHMENT STYLE, SELF-COMPASSION, EMOTIONAL EMPATHY, AND DEPRESSION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN A SELECTED INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: Research studies have claimed that depression is one of the major causes for psychological disorders as it can interfere with one's daily functioning and much research has been done into the various aspects relating to depression and its antecedents. Understanding the antecedents of depression among undergraduate university students would be beneficial to university counselors, faculty, and administrators. Correspondingly, this research examined the relationships between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance on depression, being mediated by self-compassion and emotional empathy. The key findings indicated that attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance have direct and indirect effects on depression mediated by self-compassion. The more participants experience attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety, the less they feel self-compassion, and the more depressed they feel. Accordingly, the results suggest that effort should be directed at encouraging and promoting self-compassion among those who are insecurely attached to reduce depression. Moreover, emotional empathy has a direct effect on participants reported levels of depression. That is, the more emotional empathy the participants have, the less depressed they feel. Thus, this suggests that individuals should work to strengthen their emotional empathy in order to reduce feelings of depression.

Keywords: attachment anxiety; attachment avoidance; self-compassion, emotional empathy; depression; undergraduate students

According to the WHO World Population Review (2019), Suicide Rate by Country 2019, Thailand ranks 32nd in the world for suicides with 14.4 suicides per 100,000 population and has the second highest rate of suicide cases in Southeast Asia (WHO, 2019). The most common major factors for suicide in Thailand are losing control of self, especially due to being overly intoxicated,

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