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Original research

# Predicting social anxiety based on critical parenting, self-compassion, mindfulness, and self-acceptance

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:** Psychological theories established a relationship between social anxiety and critical parenting. The aim of the present study was to investigate the prediction of social anxiety based on critical parenting, self-compassion, awareness and self-acceptance.

**Research method:** The participants are 262 students from different educational levels, and the questionnaire related to this research was presented to the participants online, which included critical parenting, social anxiety, self-compassion, awareness, and self-acceptance put an assessment.

**Findings:** The results indicated that this hypothesis is rejected and the fit of the model was not acceptable. Based on this, we removed the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety, and the rest of the relationships were evaluated, but it had no effect on the improvement of fit. Therefore, we used the hierarchical regression method. We entered the predictor and criterion variables and the amount of changes was significant and 35% of the criterion variable (social anxiety) was explained by the predictor variables (critical parenting, self-compassion, awareness, and self-acceptance) and beta in the variable of self-acceptance and Awareness plays a significant role in this regard.

**Conclusion:** Considering the importance of social dimensions in students' lives and in order to reduce their social anxiety, it is suggested that educational workshops be held for students to strengthen their compassion, awareness and self-acceptance.

**Keywords:** critical parenting, social anxiety, self-compassion, mindfulness, self-acceptance

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**Introduction:**

Social anxiety is one of the chronic disorders that causes major problems in different aspects of people's social life. Social anxiety is characterized by an intense fear of social situations where a person with this disorder imagines that all their behavior is under intense scrutiny by others. This disorder not only weakens and transforms the people who suffer from it, from the point of view of social communication and interpersonal relationships, but also imposes huge costs on the economy of any country every year (1).

Social anxiety disorder is a traumatic problem, first individual and then social, which is associated with a person's concern about being seen and noticed, and is characterized by symptoms such as blushing, dry mouth, and tremors when faced with worrying social situations (2). The mentioned social anxiety symptoms can arise from many psychological issues and factors, one of which is the critical parenting style; as recent studies have shown, people with various symptoms of social anxiety disorder often report an unhealthy critical parenting style (3). In this style, criticizing or punishing children based on poor performance, setting excessive standards, and not understanding or accepting mistakes constitute parental criticism (4). Being insulted, being threatened with physical harm, or being told that a person is worthless and useless are examples of parental criticism (5). Parental criticism can have a negative effect on the child and has been specifically linked to self-criticism (6). Self-criticism is a harmful form of self-evaluation that includes feelings of worthlessness and guilt, feelings of failure, and perceived opposition and criticism of others in response to performance in everyday activities. In line with the observed relationships between parental criticism and self-criticism, the relationship between social anxiety and parental criticism has been reported. is Justin et al. found that the sample of patients with social phobia reported significantly more parental criticism than other members of society.

Many theories of the etiology of social anxiety emphasize biological, psychological, environmental, behavioral inhibition and cognitive factors. Barlow's social anxiety etiology model emphasizes the concept of three biological, psychological and environmental vulnerabilities (7). Barlow and Hoffman show that people inherit a tendency to be anxious and inhibited, which is known as a generalized biological vulnerability. However, biological and psychological vulnerabilities may not be sufficient to cause many anxiety disorders. Barlow suggests that early life experiences may contribute to generalized biological vulnerability by inducing a reduced sense of control. Barlow believes that the third factor that is related to a specific environmental experience is parenting (7). In the etiology of social anxiety disorder, there is always a trace of parenting styles among different personality traits, especially when it comes to the criteria of the individual and the evaluations of others; In fact, one of the factors affecting social anxiety is the critical parenting style. Parental characteristics such as low emotional warmth and strict discipline are predictors of social anxiety (8).

Critical parenting style refers to a style in which parents punish children based on poor performance, and setting excessive standards, and failing to understand or accept mistakes constitute criticism of parents (8). Being insulted, threatened or physically harmed, or being told that the person is worthless and useless are examples of parental criticism (6). Based on this, one of the important factors in the emergence of emotional, behavioral and social disorders in children is the misbehavior of parents and the use of inappropriate educational methods. In general, it is assumed that the parenting style has direct effects on the emotional, behavioral and social disorders of the children Adequacy in a research (9), under the title of relationship of parenting styles and attitudes on the social skills of male and female students of the first year of the course Ahvaz secondary school concluded that there is a negative relationship between authoritarian parenting and social skills. In a research, Esfandiari investigated the effect of parenting methods of mothers of children with behavioral disorders and mothers of normal children. In this research, the results showed that the difference between the two groups of mothers is not significant in the way of liberation and authoritarianism, but it is significant in the way of logical authority. In the study of twins, Kendler et al. and high-risk American studies showed that parents' mental health and, in some studies, parents' social anxiety in particular, appeared as a risk for the onset of children's social anxiety. In general, it can be acknowledged that the parenting style and parenting behavior of parents are very important environmental factors in the formation and development of personality traits, especially during adolescence.

Although the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety has been investigated in many studies, the mechanism of this relationship and the factors that can influence this relationship are still not well understood. Positive psychology has proposed constructs such as self-compassion, self-awareness, and self-acceptance that seem to be effective on the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety. The theoretical and research literature in this field reports that in order to deal with social anxiety disorder, the symptoms of injuries and stress caused by it, various components are involved, one of which is the concept of "self-compassion". If we have an evolutionary perspective, one of the most basic characteristics of mammals, which is at a higher level than the need for sex, war and the search for power, is the great importance of care; In the case of humans, there are many evidences that show that if a person feels cared for and cared for instead of being neglected, this issue has important effects on his mental and psychological conditions (10).

Self-compassion is a relatively new phenomenon in the field of social, clinical, and personality psychology (Neff 11) and is defined as "the understanding of one's suffering, failures, and inadequacies, without any judgment, in such a way that one's experience is considered as part of the larger human experience" (11). . The construct of self-compassion is a new perspective on psychological well-being. Self-compassion means that we don't judge ourselves as good or bad and accept ourselves the way we are. Self-compassion is a powerful model for achieving a happy state and feeling satisfied with life. With unconditional self-compassion, we move away from the notions of fear, negativity, seclusion, and isolation, and with our compassion, we can increase the

level of positive states of mind such as happiness and optimism. According to Buddhist teachings, we must take care of ourselves before taking care of others. Self-compassion is one of the main concepts of Buddhist philosophy. According to this school, self-compassion is not only an emotional reaction, but also a response based on evidence and wisdom, which is in a moral form with motivation and a goal to release peace and comfort to oneself and avoid suffering and pain. Spiritual guidance is presented (12).

Another factor that seems to be effective in the relationship between social distress and critical parenting is mindfulness. Mindfulness is defined as the ability to focus and maintain attention on external and internal experiences, accompanied by non-judgmental acceptance of these experiences. Mindfulness is the quality of being present in the present moment and being fully engaged (without distraction and judgment) in what we are doing in the moment, as well as being aware of our feelings and thoughts without being overwhelmed by them. Consciousness includes a higher awareness of moment-to-moment internal states and thoughts and emotions related to them, which is in a decentralized way, such as mental events instead of an accurate reflection of oneself and reality (13). Mindfulness does not refer to a specific state of mind (such as happiness and peace) or to a specific content in the mind (such as positive feelings and thoughts). It means a certain attitude towards experience, regardless of what that experience is. It is difficult to explain its concept with words, because consciousness is basically a wordless attitude. The operational definition of consciousness, which can be considered the most useful definition, is the awareness of the present experience combined with acceptance (14).

Researches in this field indicate that with the increase in the level of consciousness, the level of satisfaction with life increases and grows significantly (13). Mindfulness predicts powerful effectiveness in purposeful response to stress in communication, relationship satisfaction, skill in identifying and showing emotions, and empathy (15). Kabat-Zinn (13) has proposed the potential effects of mindfulness skills on anxiety. Paying constant and non-judgmental attention to anxiety-related feelings, without trying to escape or avoid it, can reduce emotional reactions that are often triggered by anxiety symptoms.

Another factor influencing the relationship between social anxiety and critical parenting is self-acceptance. In their research, Grenwald and his colleagues came to the conclusion that self-acceptance is one of the characteristics of a normal personality. Self-acceptance is the dimension of self-esteem. From the perspective of Smith, Nolen-Hoeksma, et al., self-acceptance is defined as approval and approval and the value that a person perceives for himself, or the attitude that a person has about his value. Self-acceptance is the point where people accept themselves with all their flaws and when they accept their flaws, they spend their efforts to love themselves with the presence of flaws and their acceptance (16). More research in this regard shows that a high level of self-acceptance can lead to less focus on negative aspects and a higher probability of engaging in self-compassion (17). Considering the importance of the topic and the review done in the background of the research, and considering that few studies have been conducted on the underlying mechanisms of the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety in order

to examine positive psychological constructs such as self-compassion, awareness, and self-acceptance. The present study was conducted with the aim of predicting social anxiety based on critical parenting, self-compassion, awareness and self-acceptance.

In terms of the purpose of the present research, it is a fundamental research and in terms of data collection, it is a descriptive research and of the type of correlation schemes based on structural relations, modeling of structural equations. In this research, critical parenting is used as a predictor variable, social anxiety as a criterion variable and self-compassion, self-awareness and self-acceptance as a mediator variable. The statistical population of this research included students of Tehran universities (Azad, Payam Noor and State) in three levels of undergraduate, master's and doctorate, who were studying in the academic year 1400-1401. Although there is no general agreement about the sample size required for factor analysis and structural models, many researchers consider the minimum sample size to be 200 (Hafez Nia, 2018). Similarly, in the researches that are conducted by the method of structural equation modeling, according to the rule of Barclay and others, the sample size is obtained from the variable that has the largest number of components, multiplied by 10, so the sample size includes 200 students, which was obtained by available sampling method, but because The probability of missing data and the reduction of sampling error were increased and 250 samples were considered. Research tool**:**

**Leibovitz Social Anxiety Questionnaire:** Leibovitz Social Anxiety Questionnaire is the most suitable tool for assessing social anxiety, which has self-report and clinical forms; Its self-report form has 24 items, of which 11 items are related to the individual's anxiety in social interactions and 13 items are related to social performance situations, and the subject must answer each item in terms of anxiety and self-avoidance. The Leibovitz Social Anxiety Scale is the first clinical tool that assesses a wide range of social situations that are difficult for people with social anxiety disorder to face. This test yields an overall social anxiety score that classifies the individual into four levels (mild, moderate, severe, and very severe). This instrument includes six subscales including fear of social interactions, fear of social performance situations, avoidance of social interactions, avoidance of social performance situations, general fear and general avoidance. The items related to social interactions measure the two aspects of "fear of social interactions" and "avoidance of social interactions" and the items related to social performance situations measure the two aspects of "fear of social performance situations" and "avoidance of social performance situations". The Leibovitz Social Anxiety Scale is a 4-point Likert-type scale measuring fear from (no fear) to 3 (extreme fear) and avoidance scale from 0 (never; 0 percent) to 3 (usually, 67 to 100 percent). Examining the psychometric properties of this questionnaire in the study of Atari Fard et al. (2011) in the Iranian sample also shows that the retest reliability of LSAS-SR and its subscales is in the range of $r = 0.76$-$0.84$ and their internal stability of Cronbach's alpha It is also reported in the range of 0.73 to 0.93 and the convergent validity of this questionnaire with other scales of social anxiety is acceptable ($r=0.46$-$0.94$).

**Self-Compassion Questionnaire:** The self-compassion scale (18) contains 26 items that measure the components of self-compassion and includes six subscales of self-kindness (items 5, 12, 19,

23 and 26), self-control (items 1, 11, 8, 16 and 21), common humanity (Articles 3, 7, 10 and 15), isolation (Articles 4, 13, 18 and 25), vigilance (Articles 9, 16, 17 and 22) and excessive sympathy ( Articles 2, 6, 20 and 24). This scale is a 5-point Likert scale (1 = almost never, 5 = almost always). The overall self-compassion scale score is calculated using the average scores of all the items, after reversing the items that were entered in a negative form; in such a way that items 1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 8, 13, 19, 18, 20, 21, 26 and 25 are scored in reverse. Research related to the validation of this questionnaire has shown that all these six subscales have a high internal correlation, and confirmatory factor analyzes have also shown that a separate factor of self-compassion explains this internal correlation. The internal consistency coefficient of this questionnaire is 0.92 and reliability by NEF (18) has reported high reliability for the mentioned scale. Its overall reliability was obtained through Cronbach's alpha method of 92/92. Also, each of the subscales had internal consistency (from 0.75 to 0.81). In addition, the retest reliability of this scale has been reported as 0.93 after two weeks. Also, the mentioned scale has relatively high convergent and discriminant validity. The internal consistency of this scale in Richardson et al.'s study was 0.88. Nef's self-compassion scale (2003) has strong psychometric properties and has good validity and reliability.

**Chamberlain and Haga 20-question questionnaire**: This questionnaire was compiled by Chamberlain and Haga. This questionnaire contains 20 statements and has two subscales of unconditional self-acceptance and conditional self-acceptance, and it is applicable for the age group of 14 years and older. How to answer this questionnaire is on a Likert scale from 1=completely false to 7=always true. After receiving the questionnaire from the creators, Shafiabadi and Niknam translated it into Farsi in Iran and after a preliminary study, they obtained the internal consistency of their unconditional acceptance questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha method of 0.70. Also, the convergent validity of this questionnaire was obtained through the correlation of its scores with the Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire of 0.37 (<0.008).

**Frost's Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale Questionnaire (FROST-MPS):** This questionnaire contains 35 items that assess a person's trait/intrinsic perfectionism. This scale is divided into 6 subscales. In this research, we used subscale 4 which measures critical parenting. Questions number 3/5/22/35 measure the scale of parents' criticism. The scoring method is a 5-point Likert scale, where the score (1) is completely disagree to the score 5 is completely agree. The validity and reliability of Frost's multidimensional perfectionism scale in Iranian non-clinical samples has high validity and reliability.

**Bauer et al.'s five-facet mindfulness questionnaire (FFMQ):** This questionnaire is used to show the elements of mindfulness, which includes five aspects: observation, description, action with awareness, non-judgment of inner experience, and non-reaction to inner experience. This tool is a 39-item self-assessment scale developed by Bauer et al. by combining items from the Freiberg Mindfulness Questionnaire, Mindfulness and Mindfulness Scale (Brown and Ryan, 2003), Kanchuki Mindfulness Scale (Bauer and Smith, 2004), The revised Cognitive and Emotional Mindfulness scale and the Southampton Mindfulness Questionnaire have been developed using the factor analysis approach. Bauer conducted an exploratory factor analysis on a sample of

university students. The obtained factors were named as follows: observation, action combined with alertness, being non-judgmental to inner experience, describing and being non-reactive. The correlation between factors was moderate and significant in all cases and was in a range between 0.15 and 0.34 (Neuser, 2010). Also, in a study conducted on the validation and reliability of this questionnaire in Iran, the test-retest correlation coefficients of the FFMQ questionnaire in the Iranian sample were between r=0.57 (related to non-judgmental factor) and r=0.84 (observation factor) ) was observed. Also, the alpha coefficients were acceptable (between $\alpha = 0.55$ for the non-reactive factor and $\alpha = 0.83$ for the description factor).

The data analysis of this research has been done in two parts, descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics and column charts are used in the descriptive statistics section, and in the inferential statistics section, hypothesis path analysis test method, regression method and structural equations using SPSS and AMUS software will be used.

**Findings:**

One of the main assumptions of regression and correlation test is the normality of continuous variables and the validity of this test is the normality of its continuous variables. For this purpose, the Kolmogorov-Smirinov test (Explore option of descriptive analysis) was used. Calculations have been done with 262 samples.

**Table (1) – the result of Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests**

| Variable | Stats | DF | meaningful |
|---|---|---|---|
| self-compassion | 0/036 | 262 | 0/200 |
| self-acceptance | 0/066 | 262 | 0/078 |
| social anxiety | 0/081 | 262 | 0/0005 |
| Vigilance | 0/059 | 262 | 0/029 |
| Critical parenting | 0/088 | 262 | 0/0005 |

The results obtained from the Klomogrov Smirinov test show that the variables "self-compassion" and "self-acceptance" are normal. Regarding other variables of the research, such as their skewness and elongation, they are in the range of ±1; they can be considered normal.

As can be seen, the outliers have very little effect on the mean because there is not much difference between the total means and the mean after removing 5% of the outliers. In the self-compassion variable, the average score obtained (78.66) was not much different from the average score that could be obtained (78). Also, in the acceptance variable, the obtained average (79.58) was not significantly different from the average obtainable grade (80). But the average score obtained in the variable of social anxiety is equal to 47.98, which is significantly lower than the average score (60). Regarding the intelligence variable, the average score (126.79) is higher than the average score (117). Examining the average of critical parenting variable (10.19) is lower than the average score that can be obtained (12).

**First hypothesis: Critical parenting and social anxiety have a significant relationship with the mediating role of self-compassion, mindfulness and self-acceptance.** To test this hypothesis, the following structural model was designed and analyzed in aMOS software.

**Table (2).** The fit indices of the model

| Indicator | $\chi 2$ | DF | $\chi 2/df$ | p-value | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | NFI |
|-----------|------|-----|--------|---------|-------|------|-------|------|
| amount | 265/40 | 3 | 88/47 | 0/0005 | 0/587 | 0/710 | -0/452 | 0/409 |

The above indicators show that the fit of the model is not acceptable. Although in order to modify the variable model, we removed the predictor direct path and the criterion, which has a very low relationship in the image of the model, but the fit indices were slightly improved and the following results were obtained.

**Table (3) -** Table of model fit indices

| Indicator | $\chi 2$ | DF | $\chi 2/df$ | p-value | RMSEA | GFI | AGFI | NFI |
|-----------|------|-----|--------|---------|-------|------|-------|------|
| amount | 267/28 | 4 | 66/82 | 0/0005 | 0/502 | 0/708 | -0/096 | 0/404 |

The above indices show that the fit indices have improved slightly and are not acceptable, therefore, an alternative method was used to investigate the mediating role of the variables "self-compassion", "awareness" and "self-acceptance". Hierarchical regression test was used and in the first step, predictor variable (critical parenting) and mediating variables were included in the calculations. In the second step, the three variables that were the multiplication of the predictor variable in each intermediate variable were entered into the calculation. The criterion variable of "social anxiety" was determined. The results obtained are stated below:

Table (4) shows the summary of the hierarchical regression model in two stages, which according to the said process, the variables were entered in the calculations.

**Table (4)** - Summary of hierarchical regression model

| Model | R | $R^2$ | $R^2$ changes | F | DF1 | DF2 | F Significance of changes | Watson camera |
|-------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|------|
| 1 | 0/591 | 0/350 | 0/350 | 11/95956 | 4 | 257 | 0/0005 | |
| 2 | 0/594 | 0/353 | 0/003 | 12/00415 | 3 | 254 | 0/778 | 2/034 |

The above table shows that by entering 4 variables in the first step, the conditions of the table are similar to model 1 (F = (4,257) 11.95956; P = 0.0005); the value of R = 0.350 obtained is significant and 35% of social anxiety is explained by the variables of the first step. But in the

second step, when the product variables are added to the calculations, no new meaningful explanation occurs. The following table of coefficients reports to check the role of the variables included in the test.

The table of coefficients shows that in the first step, 35% of social anxiety is explained by the 4 variables of the first step, and beta in the two variables of self-acceptance and awareness play a significant role in this regard. But in the second step, when special variables are added, not only a stronger and meaningful explanation does not occur; moreover, none of the beta coefficients are significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. In other words, the mediating role of self-compassion, mindfulness and self-acceptance in the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety is not significant.

The first sub-hypothesis: critical parenting has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. Pearson's correlation was used to test the hypothesis, and the following dot chart shows this relationship better.

**Table (5) -** correlation matrix between variables

|  |  | social anxiety |
|---|---|---|
| Critical parenting | Correlation coefficient | 0/261 |
|  | 2-sided significance | 0/0005 |

The result of this test shows that there is a significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

The second sub-hypothesis: self-compassion has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. Pearson's correlation and stepwise regression test were used to test the hypothesis. First, their relationship was obtained by Pearson's correlation test, and then the dot chart shows this relationship better.

**Table (6) -** correlation matrix between variables

|  |  | social anxiety |
|---|---|---|
| self-compassion | Correlation coefficient | -0/495 |
|  | 2-sided significance | 0/0005 |

The result of this test shows that there is a significant negative relationship between self-compassion and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level, and the hypothesis is confirmed.

The third sub-hypothesis: Conscientiousness has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. Pearson's correlation was used to test the hypothesis, and the following dot chart shows this relationship better.

**Table (7) -** correlation matrix between variables

|  |  | social anxiety |
|---|---|---|
| Vigilance | Correlation coefficient | -0/508 |
|  | 2-sided significance | 0/0005 |

The result of this test shows that there is a significant negative relationship between intelligence and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed.

The fourth sub-hypothesis: self-acceptance has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. To test the hypothesis, their relationship was obtained from Pearson's correlation, and the following dot chart shows this relationship better.

**Table (8) -** correlation matrix between variables

|  |  | social anxiety |
|---|---|---|
| self-acceptance | Correlation coefficient | -0/507 |
|  | 2-sided significance | 0/0005 |

The result of this test shows that there is a significant negative relationship between self-acceptance and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed.

**Discussion and conclusion:**

The aim of the present study was to investigate the prediction of social anxiety based on critical parenting, self-compassion, awareness and self-acceptance. The first sub-hypothesis states that critical parenting has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. The findings obtained from the Pearson correlation test show that there is a significant positive relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety. This finding is consistent with the findings of researches (19-20). Egan et al showed that critical parenting is a meta-diagnostic construct that is associated with a wide range of psychological disorders and includes and maintains many pathological forms such as eating disorders, social anxiety and even schizophrenia. Scott et al also stated that according to cognitive behavioral models, perfectionistic beliefs in critical parenting style and anticipatory processing are the main factors in maintaining social anxiety. However, in the regression analysis test, critical parenting could not significantly explain social anxiety. This finding with the results obtained from Hadi's research showed that there is a significant negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and social anxiety and its components (avoidance and distress, fear of evaluation) and also between permissive parenting style and social anxiety and its components. There was a significant positive relationship. As a result, teenagers who have parents with an authoritative parenting style have less social anxiety than teenagers who have an authoritarian and permissive parenting style. And Gholami Yazdi stated in a study that there is a significant negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and social anxiety and its components (avoidance and distress, fear of evaluation) and also a significant positive relationship between permissive parenting style and social anxiety and its components there was As a result, teenagers who have parents with an authoritative parenting style have less social anxiety than teenagers who

have an authoritarian and permissive parenting style. Several things can be mentioned to explain this finding. First, maybe the role of culture is important in this case. A culture like Iran's culture, which is mostly a critical parenting style, should have more collective acceptance of this style and therefore, because it is considered to be the spirit of the times, it should not lead to disorders such as social anxiety. Second, due to the fact that the questionnaires were filled online, perhaps the participants did not have a correct understanding of the questions in the questionnaire and it caused bias. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate this relationship in future researches in Iranian culture. Thirdly, maybe the questionnaire used to measure critical parenting or social anxiety does not have the ability to measure these constructs in Iranian culture. Therefore, it is necessary to use other tools to measure these structures in future researches.

The second sub-hypothesis states that self-compassion has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. Pearson's correlation and hierarchical regression test were used to test the hypothesis. First, their relationship was obtained by Pearson's correlation test and showed that there is a significant negative and strong relationship between self-compassion and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level, and the hypothesis is confirmed. In a more detailed investigation, it was found that 27.4% of social anxiety is explained by self-compassion subscales. The subscales of "extreme identification" by 22.9%, "self-kindness" by 2.9%, and "isolation" by 1.7% of the self-compassion variable had a significant role in this explanation, and other subscales did not have a significant role in this explanation. This finding is consistent with the findings of researches (21-23). Khorramnia et al. concluded that self-compassion and rumination are predictors of social anxiety. Batts et al.'s research shows that having a compassionate attitude can reduce the symptoms of social anxiety.

The third sub-hypothesis states that awareness has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. Pearson correlation was used to test the hypothesis. The result of this test showed that there is a significant negative relationship between intelligence and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed. But because in this study we were looking for the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship between social anxiety and critical parenting and the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety was not significant in our research, therefore the mediating role of mindfulness was not confirmed. Therefore, we used a hierarchical regression, which obtained conscientiousness as a significant predictor of social anxiety. And beta was found to be the only significant role in consciousness. In this section, this finding is consistent with the findings of researches (24-25). Rabatmaili and Karimi (24) showed that there is a significant relationship between metacognitive beliefs, intelligence and fear of evaluation with social anxiety of teenagers. Mohadi et al also showed that cognitive therapy based on mindfulness was effective in reducing perceived stress in women with social anxiety disorder. In explaining this finding, it can be said that mindfulness, or in other words, educational mindfulness, is used to achieve a new attitude, accept without judgment, approach feelings and thoughts to get rid of negative moods, and is a technique that is combined with meditation and orientation. Specific mental attitudes toward an experience encourage awareness of the present in

a nonjudgmental way, minimizing conflict in thoughts and feelings. This psychological factor is one of the most widely used components in the third wave cognitive behavioral therapies, which has the ability to reduce social anxiety by teaching the techniques of being present in the moment and also promoting acceptance. On the other hand, constantly observing the feelings related to anxiety without judgment, without trying to escape or avoid them, reduces the emotional reactions that are usually provoked by the symptoms of anxiety. Brown and Ryan emphasize that increasing attention and awareness towards emotions and positive practical tendencies is one of the positive aspects of mindfulness, and mindfulness increases feeling without judgment and helps to be aware of emotions and accept them (24). Therefore, it seems that the emotional problems experienced by people with social anxiety include the lack of awareness of their emotional states as well as the inability to regulate emotions. Awareness has the ability to influence people's emotional system, change their outlook on life and improve the quality of their communication with themselves, others and the world through acceptance.

The fourth sub-hypothesis states that self-acceptance has a significant relationship with students' social anxiety. To test the hypothesis, their relationship was obtained from Pearson's correlation. The result of this test shows that there is a significant negative relationship between self-acceptance and social anxiety at the 99% confidence level. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed. But because in this study we were looking for the mediating role of self-acceptance in the relationship between social anxiety and critical parenting and the relationship between critical parenting and social anxiety was not significant in our research, the mediating role of self-acceptance was not confirmed. Therefore, we used hierarchical regression, which obtained self-acceptance as a significant predictor of social anxiety. And beta was recognized as the only significant role in self-acceptance. The graph of the relationship between self-acceptance and social anxiety shows that the relationship between self-acceptance and social anxiety is significant but weak. This finding is consistent with the research findings (26-27). Roohi and his colleagues in the research they conducted in 2016 showed that teaching self-acceptance to students leads to an increase in self-acceptance psychologically and mentally, instead of avoiding thoughts and situations they face when speaking or being in public to internal experiences and also by setting more social goals, they can deal with social anxiety disorder. In explaining these results and aligning with previous researches, it can be said that since self-acceptance means that you should accept what you are and not to be what you like; And you should also accept your good and bad traits; On the other hand, self-acceptance is a cognitive process, and acceptance literature includes self-acceptance and acceptance of others, and researches have shown the connection and correlation between the two (27). Self-acceptance is the degree of approval and approval and value that a person feels for himself, or the judgment that a person has about his own worth. This can lead to acceptance of others in addition to self-acceptance. Interpersonal relationships improve with self-acceptance. In other words, when a person accepts himself, he can accept others better, which can strengthen a person's social interactions and reduce social anxiety and fear of communicating with people in society.

**Limitations of the research:** Like other researches, this research had limitations, and one of these limitations was the mental and emotional state of the students when answering the questions, which may affect the accuracy and accuracy of their answers, and this limitation was uncontrollable.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors hereby declare that this work is the result of an independent research and does not have any conflict of interest with other organizations and individuals.

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