



Social Sciences Spectrum

A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, HEC recognized [Y-category](#) Research Journal

E-ISSN: [3006-0427](#) P-ISSN: [3006-0419](#)

Volume 04, Issue 03, 2025

Web link: <https://sss.org.pk/index.php/sss>



Check for updates

Exploring the Impact of Self-compassion and Personality Traits on the Association Between Relational Betrayal Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth in Young Adults

Mamoona Sabir

MS Scholar, Psychology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab-Pakistan

Dr. Fozia Akram

Assistant Professor (OPS), Psychology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab-Pakistan

Correspondence Author : foziaakram2013@gmail.com

Article Information [YY-MM-DD]

Received 2025-05-23

Accepted 2025-08-14

Citation (APA):

Sabir, M & Akram, F. (2025). Exploring the impact of self-compassion and personality traits on the association between relational betrayal trauma and posttraumatic growth in young adults. *Social Sciences Spectrum*, 4(3), 430-448. <https://doi.org/10.71085/sss.04.03.345>

Abstract

Research examined the mediating effect of self-compassion on the link between relational betrayal trauma (non-romantic) and posttraumatic growth. Research went on to examine the moderating influence of personality traits on the existing mediating relationship. The data was collected from students ($M = 1.60$; $S.D. = .49$) of different public sector universities of Faisalabad currently enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs. Purposive sampling method was used for collecting data. Data was analyzed using SPSS 20. Good psychometric characteristics were revealed for measured variables. Results demonstrated that the Big-five inventory ($\alpha = .74$), relational betrayal trauma scale ($\alpha = .87$), self-compassion scale ($\alpha = .76$), and posttraumatic growth inventory ($\alpha = .89$) were found reliable. It was confirmed by the findings that direct effect of relational betrayal trauma on the growth following trauma was fully and significantly bridged by self-compassion. The moderated mediation revealed that personality traits like agreeableness and conscientiousness moderates the relationship. Study helps the psychologist to gain insight about the importance of self-compassion which leads towards growth following trauma.

Keywords: Relational Betrayal Trauma, Self-compassion, Posttraumatic Growth, Undergraduate Programs, Moderates the Relationship.



Content from this work may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 4.0 International License](#) that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgment of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

Introduction

Betrayal trauma has become the notable concern in the modern society. There has been increasing interest on spreading awareness about the negative psychological and emotional consequences of betrayal trauma. According to the research, trauma is an extensive phenomenon that impacts the overall wellbeing of the victim (Kleber, 2019). Relational betrayal trauma results after experiencing betrayal from relationships, including family members, close friends and partners. It involves the emotional violation of trust by the person the victim depends on (Freyd, 2008).

Not everyone responds to trauma in the same way, there are individual differences in thinking, feelings and behaving that are persistent and stable variations known as personality traits. Personality traits have a major influence on both how the betrayal trauma impacts a person and how to recover from it. Although people share similar traumatic experiences but the responses to trauma and the time given to recover from trauma vary greatly from one person to another, depending on their unique personality traits.

The damaging effects of relational betrayal trauma are widely known, but some processes stimulate the healing and positive change following traumas. One possible variable that has been identified as self-compassion enables the victims of trauma to face their trauma with less criticism and high emotional resilience. Self-compassion acts as a coping mechanism which helps in reducing post trauma symptoms (Toyooka, 2024). The individuals who are highly compassionate towards themselves have ability to effectively deal with breaches in a relationship in healthy way, which lead them towards posttraumatic growth.

With the increasing rate of relational betrayal in contemporary social dynamics and its complex psychological effects, it is crucial to understand the resilience and transformation processes. Such insights are crucial for developing trauma theory as well as for guiding specialized treatment approaches that improve psychological health and posttraumatic recovery. The research finding indicates the potential of PTG as protective factor in achieving recovery and wellbeing in survivors (Jankovic et al., 2022).

Overall, this research contributes to the unexplored area of trauma studies through scrutinizing the psychological consequences of non-romantic betrayal trauma. This presents the refined model to comprehend the connection of personality traits, relational betrayal trauma, and compassion towards oneself with posttraumatic growth in young adults. . The contribution of self-compassion helps professionals in order to develop plus design therapeutic interventions that shape the growth and recovery after trauma. This study has the potential to contribute to both theoretical innovation and practical application in psychological research.

Rationale of the Study

Relational betrayal trauma is a serious psychological problem and becoming more prevalent among youth especially in close relationships like with the family, friends, partner, or authority figures. The noticeable increase in relational betrayal occurrences in non-romantic close relationships often leads toward negative emotional and psychological health so there is need to shift focus on the recovery following trauma. This study will strive to enhance the comprehension of self-compassion in assisting people to work through betrayal trauma and promote personal transformation and resilience.

However, the manner in which people cope with trauma and cultivate self-compassion could vary based on their personality traits as trait like openness to experience may be more prone to psychological flexibility, which promote growth. While people with high neuroticism may

ruminate more and find it harder to access self-compassion (Pyszkowska, 2020; Marshall & Brockman, 2016).

Hypotheses of the study

Hypotheses of the current research includes

H1: Self-compassion would significantly mediate the relationship between relational betrayal trauma and post traumatic growth in young adults.

H2: To investigate the moderating role of personality traits on the relationship between relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion in young adults.

Research Methodology

Research Design

To explore the mediation and moderation, a cross-sectional research design was used.

Sample

Targeted population consists of the undergraduate and graduate students from the public sector universities of Faisalabad with the sample of N=241 (M= 1.60; S. D= .49) young adults. Both men and women have given representation in the sample. The age composition of the sample comprised of 18 to 26 years has been selected using purposive sampling technique.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Students with an age range 18-26 years have participated in the current study. Participants must have experienced at least one instance of relational betrayal within a non-romantic relationship, such as parents, siblings, close friends, cousins, and relatives. The betrayal trauma characterized by emotional suffering is included with intentional exclusion of financial betrayal from close non-romantic relationship. The betrayal experience must be significantly distressful to be considered as trauma. The participant must be able to understand English language for better responses. The betrayal must be experienced in past years. The students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs were included. The students who was suffering from any psychological disorder and having history of present and past sufferings were excluded from the study. The married students were excluded.

Instruments

Demographic Information Sheet

Demographic information sheet consists of information about age, gender, education level, betrayal experience from non-romantic relationships.

Relational Betrayal Trauma Scale-English (Akram & Iftikahr, 2024)

Relational betrayal trauma scale- English by Akram and Iftikhar (2024) is a 20-items scale used to measure painful experiences and perceptions of young adults regarding relational betrayal within close relationships (non-romantic). The subscales include emotional reactivity, avoidant reactivity, interpersonal problems and self-perception. Ratings were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongest disagreement) to 5 (strongest agreement). Higher score on the scale shows higher levels of betrayal trauma and low score shows low levels of betrayal trauma.

Big-Five Personality Inventory (John et al. 1991)

Personality inventory was used to assess the personality attributes of adult participants. The BFI assesses the various domains of personality. Inventory consists of 44 concise statements. The subscales include traits like extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, neuroticism and conscientiousness. The respondents answered on a 5-point rating scale, ranging from 1 (being disagree strongly) to 5 (being agree strongly). Respondents achieved higher score on particular subscale exhibit that personality trait more prominently than the other traits.

Neff's Self-Compassion Scale (Short-form)

The standardized scale assessed compassion towards oneself in the difficult times. Participants gave each item a rating on a 5-point Likert scale. Items rating tells about the frequency of respondent engage in self-compassionate behavior, with 1 being never and 5 being always. The SCS-SF is an efficient substitute for the original SCS, especially for assessing composite scores.

Post-traumatic growth inventory (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996)

An indigenously standardized 21-items scale was used to access the self-improvement a person undergoes after experiencing trauma. This inventory includes five factors like personal strength, new possibilities, improved relationships, spiritual growth and appreciation for life. The 6-point Likert scale was used for collecting responses from participants. Rating varies from 0 (represents no improvement) to 5 (represents high improvement). Participant scored 50 or above is thought to result in significant post-traumatic growth. The internal consistency of 21-items PTGI is $\alpha=.9$.

Procedure

Participants were selected to take part in study through purposive sampling. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were designed for participation. The subjects who had painful experience of emotional betrayal were main member of the study while those with no betrayal trauma were excluded. Subjects with any other past and present psychological suffering were excluded. Each participant was first completed the demographic details for initial evaluation to screen out the participants with trauma. Assessments include socio demographic information and self-report questionnaires such as Relational Betrayal Trauma Scale (RBTS), Big-Five Personality Inventory (BFI-44), Self-compassion Sale-Short Form (SCS-SF), and Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI).

A total of 300 respondents completed the forms and after cleaning data by excluding those subjects who had not experienced relational betrayal trauma in non-romantic relationships, age above 26 years, married males and females, and incomplete responses, 241 functional sample was left. The sample size was estimated by G*Power software for good results. Data collection was followed by entering data in SPSS and subjected for analysis. Regression analysis for mediation and moderation using process macro by Hayes and Andrew were employed for analyzing the data.

Ethical Considerations

Significant committee of ethics granted ethical approval for research. Consent form was taken by all respondents, ensuring voluntary participation. Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained, and participants were advised about the privilege to leave the study without consequences. Research adhered to ethical guidelines for human subjects' research.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences-20 (SPSS 20) was used for the analysis of data. Descriptive statistics, reliability, regression analysis for mediation and moderation using process macro by Hayes and Andrew were used.

Results

Table 1: *Frequency and percentage of demographic characteristics (N=241)*

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
Age		
18-20	80	33.2
21-23	124	51.5
24-26	37	15.4
Gender		
Men	97	40.2
Women	144	59.8
Education		
Graduate	74	30.7
Undergraduate	167	69.3

Note. *f* = frequency; % = percentages

The predominant number of participants range between the ages of 21 and 23 (51.5%) and mostly were females (59.8%). Participants represented all education levels, with high proportion with undergraduate students (69.3).

Table 2: *Reliability for All Study Variables*

Variables	No. of items	Apha (α)
RBT	20	.87
Personality traits	44	.74
Self-compassion	12	.76
Posttraumatic Growth	21	.89

Note. α = Reliability; RBT= Relational Betrayal Trauma

The alpha reliability value for relational betrayal trauma is .87; personality traits are .74; self-compassion is .76 and posttraumatic growth is .89. This shows good internal consistency of measurement scales.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients of Relational Betrayal Trauma on Self-compassion (N = 241)

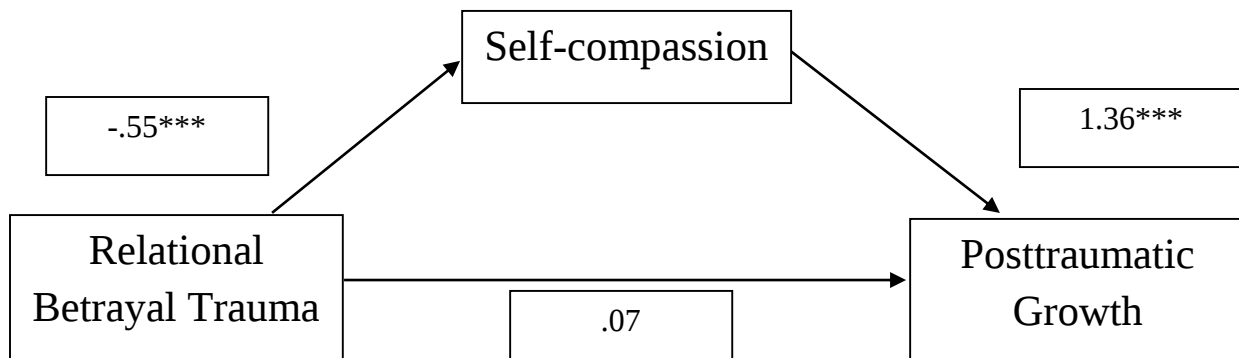
Variables	B	95% CI	SE B	B	R ²
					.48
Constant	57.06***	[54.19, 59.93]	1.46		
RBT	-.46***	[-.52, -.39]	.03	-.69***	

Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT= Relational Betrayal Trauma

*** $p < .001$

Relational betrayal trauma impacts on self-compassion among young adults. Relational betrayal trauma identifies as a strong negative predictor of self-compassion, accounted for 48% of variance with $F(1, 239) = 224.41, p < .001$.

Model 1: Mediation



The above model shows that relational betrayal trauma (non-romantic relationships) significantly negatively predicted posttraumatic growth ($\beta = -.4, p < .001$). Compassion towards oneself significantly positively predicted posttraumatic growth ($\beta = .65, p < .001$). Relational betrayal trauma shows negative association with self-compassion ($\beta = -.69, p < .001$). It shows that the effect of relational betrayal trauma become insignificant ($\beta = .05, p = .48$) after adding self-compassion as mediator which confirm full mediation. This shows diminished direct effect of relational betrayal trauma on posttraumatic growth and increased regression weight ($-.4$ to $.05$) for relational betrayal trauma. This means relational betrayal trauma shows stronger effect on posttraumatic growth.

Table 4: Regression Analysis examining mediation via Self-compassion between Relational Betrayal Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)

Variable	B	95% CI	SE B	B	R ²	ΔR ²
Step 1					.16	.16***
Constant	86.58***	[78.88,94.29]	3.91			
RBT	-.55***	[-.71, -.39]	.08	-.4***		
Step 2					.38	.22***
Constant	9.07	[-9.06, 27.19]	9.20			
RBT	.07	[-.13, .26]	.09	.05		
SC	1.36***	[1.06, 1.65]	.15	.65***		

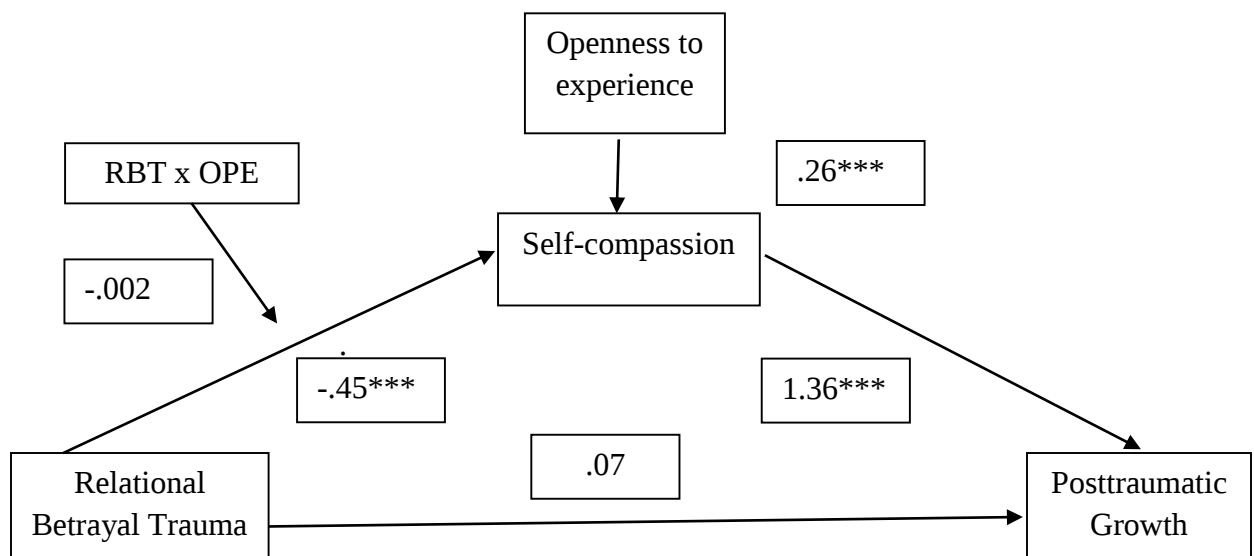
Note. CI = confidence interval

*** $p < .001$

Table demonstrated regression analysis for the facilitating role of self-compassion. Relational betrayal trauma accounted for 16% variance in the criterion variable (Posttraumatic growth) with $F(1, 239) = 45.52, p < .001$. Relational betrayal trauma negatively predicted posttraumatic growth ($\beta = -.4, p < .001$). In second step, relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion accounted for 38% variance in posttraumatic growth with $F(2, 238) = 71.49, p < .001$. The effect of relational betrayal trauma ($\beta = .05, p = .48$) on posttraumatic growth became insignificant and self-compassion positively predicted posttraumatic growth ($\beta = .65, p < .001$). Self-compassion accounted for significant 16% increase of variance in the outcome variable. The negative impact of relational betrayal trauma on posttraumatic growth becomes insignificant which confirms full mediation. More specifically, after adding self-compassion as the predictor, negative influence of relational betrayal trauma on posttraumatic growth reduced from significant to non-significant but the indirect paths remained significant.

Model 2

Moderated Mediation of Openness to Experience



The above model shows openness to experience positively predicted self-compassion. There found no moderated mediation of openness to experience on the relationship due to insignificant interaction of Relational Betrayal Trauma and openness to experience ($b = -.002$, $p = .72$).

Table 5: *Moderated Mediation Analysis of Openness to Experience on the association of Relational Betrayal Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Model 1						
Constant	36.04***	.39	93.53	<.001	35.28	36.80
RBT	-.45***	.03	-14.95	<.001	-.51	-.39
OPE	.26***	.07	3.66	<.001	.12	.40
RBT x OPE	-.002	.005	-.36	.72	-.01	.008
Model 2						
Constant	12.21***	5.49	2.23	.02	1.41	23.02
RBT	.07	.09	.69	.49	-.13	.26
SC	1.36***	.15	9.06	<.001	1.06	1.65
IMM	-.002	.01			-.024	.015

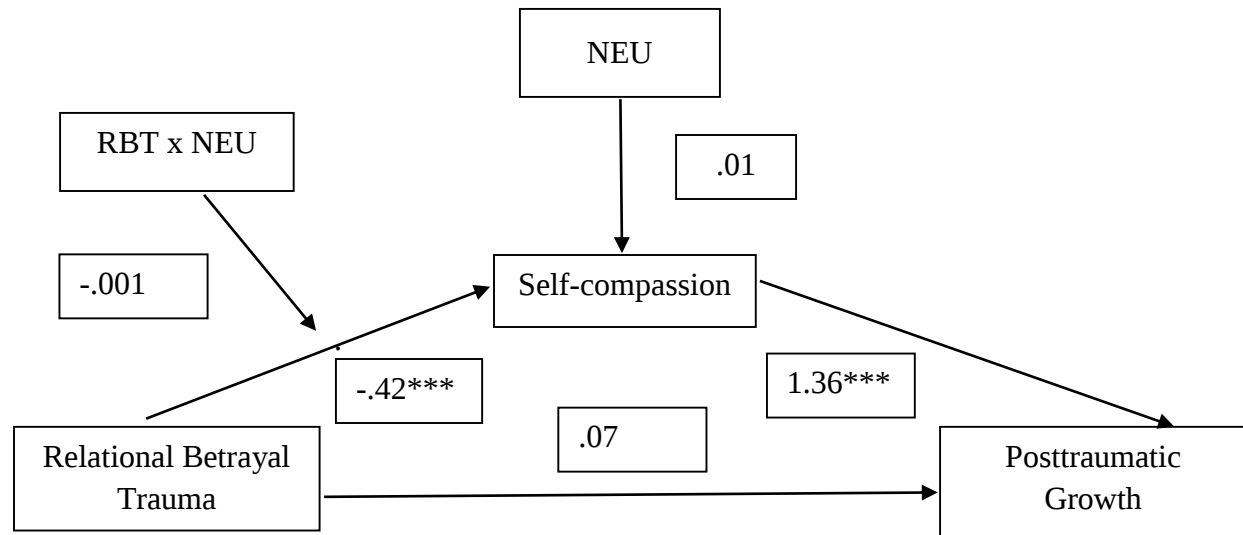
Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT = Relational Betrayal Trauma; OPE = Openness to experience; SC = Self-compassion; IMM = Index of Moderated Mediation

*** $P < .001$

Table 5 shows the moderated mediation of openness to experience. Relational betrayal trauma and openness to experience explained 51% of variance in self-compassion with $F(3, 237) = 83.99$, $p < .001$. Relational betrayal trauma is linked with lower levels of self-compassion ($b = -.45$, $p < .001$). While openness to experience is linked with higher levels of self-compassion ($b = .26$, $p < .001$). Interaction between relational betrayal trauma and openness to experience was insignificant ($b = -.002$, $p = .72$). The findings revealed that the effect of relational betrayal trauma on self-compassion was not moderated by openness to experience. Relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion accounted for 37.5% variance in posttraumatic growth with $F(2, 238) = 71.49$, $p < .001$. Relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion significantly predicted posttraumatic growth. The direct association of relational betrayal trauma with Posttraumatic growth was no longer insignificant ($b = .07$, $p = .49$). Self-compassion positively predicted posttraumatic growth ($b = 1.36$, $p < .001$). The moderated mediation index ($b = -.002$, 95% CI [-0.024, 0.015]) was not significant. The result revealed that openness to experience didn't change the strength of association from relational betrayal trauma to posttraumatic growth.

Model 3

Moderated Mediation of Neuroticism



The above model shows insignificant interaction of Relational betrayal trauma and neuroticism ($b = -.001$, $p = .83$) which means there exist no moderated mediation.

Table 6: *Moderated Mediation Analysis of Neuroticism on the association of Relational Betrayal Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Model 1						
Constant	56.62***	6.64	8.52	<.001	43.54	69.71
RBT	-.42***	.15	-2.86	.005	-.71	-.13
NEU	.01	.26	.05	.96	-.50	.53
RBT x NEU	-.001	.006	-.21	.83	-.01	.01
Model 2						
Constant	9.07	9.20	.99	.33	-9.06	27.20
RBT	.07	.10	.69	.49	-.13	.26
SC	1.36***	.15	9.06	<.001	1.06	1.65
IMM	-.002	.012			-.028	.018

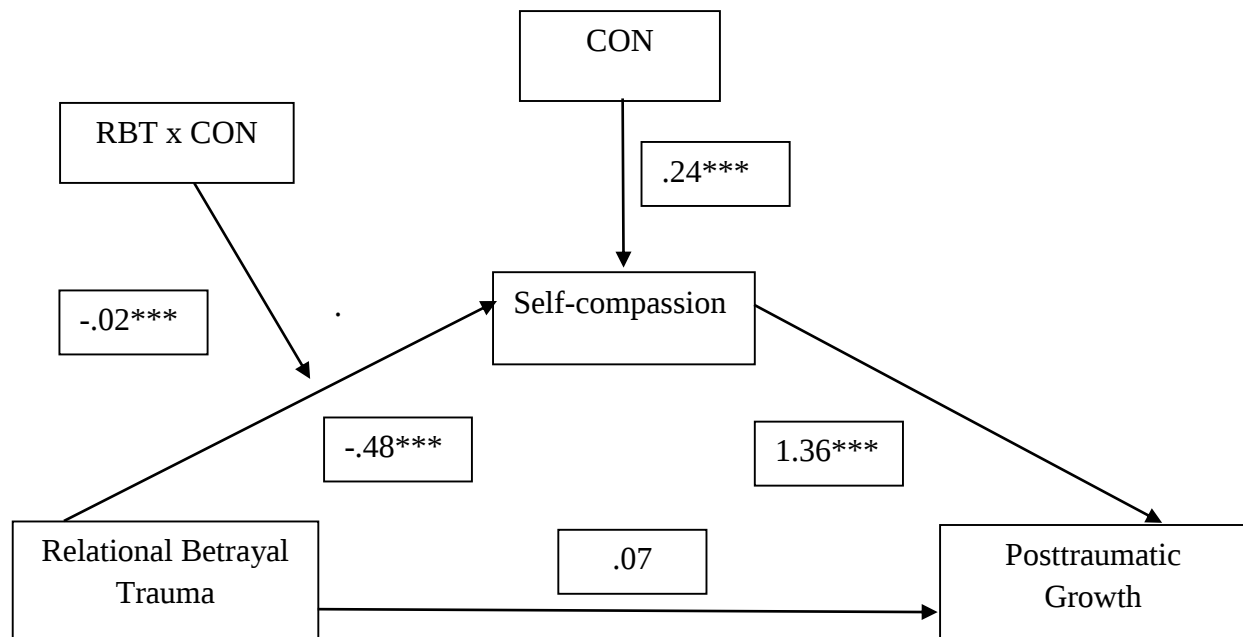
Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT = Relational Betrayal Trauma; NEU = Neuroticism; SC = Self-compassion; IMM = Index of Moderated Mediation

Table 6 shows that relational betrayal trauma and neuroticism accounted for 48.5% variance in self-compassion with $F(3, 237) = 74.33$, $p < .001$. Results reveal significant inverse influence of relational betrayal trauma on self-compassion ($b = -.42$, $p = .005$). Neuroticism failed to predict self-compassion significantly ($b = .01$, $p = .96$). Relational betrayal trauma and neuroticism interaction was insignificant ($b = -.001$, $p = .83$), suggesting the effects of relational betrayal

trauma and self-compassion did not depend on neuroticism. 37.5% of variance in outcome variable (posttraumatic growth) was accounted by relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion with $F(2, 238) = 71.49, p < .001$. The moderated mediation index ($b = -.002, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.028, 0.018]$) was not significant. The result revealed that neuroticism didn't change the strength of association from relational betrayal trauma to posttraumatic growth via self-compassion.

Model 4

Moderated Mediation of Conscientiousness



The above model shows moderated mediation of conscientiousness. Interaction of relational betrayal trauma and conscientiousness was significant ($b = -.02, p = .001$).

Table 7: Moderated Mediation Analysis of Conscientiousness on the association of Relational Betrayal Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Model 1						
Constant	36.02***	.38	95.52	<.001	35.273	36.758
RBT	-.48***	.03	-15.99	<.001	-.534	-.417
CON	.24***	.08	3.21	.002	.092	.383
RBT x CON	-.02***	.006	-3.51	.001	-.031	-.009
CE						
Low (-5.15)	-.37***	.04	-10.15	<.001	-.447	-.302
Mean (.000)	-.48***	.03	-15.99	<.001	-.534	-.417
High (5.15)	-.58***	.05	-12.64	<.001	-.667	-.487
Model 2						
Constant	12.21***	5.49	2.23	.027	1.406	23.016
RBT	.07	.09	.69	.49	-.126	.262
SC	1.36***	.15	9.06	<.001	1.063	1.654
IMM	-.027	.009			-.045	-.010

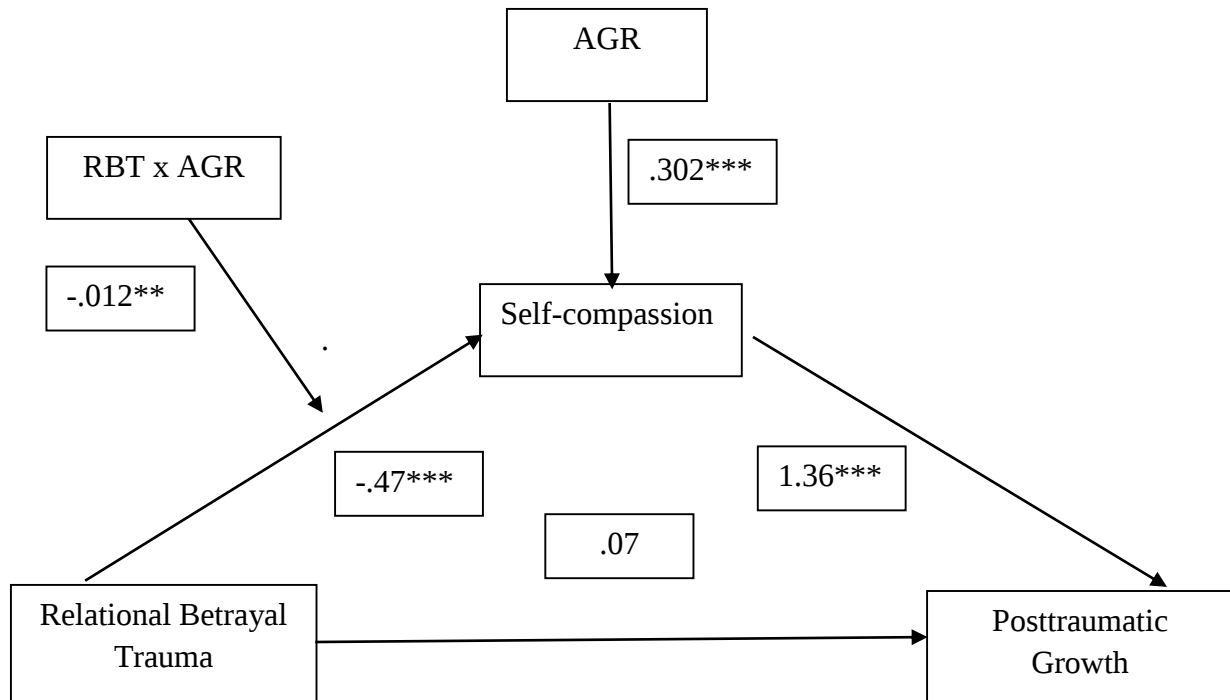
Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT = Relational Betrayal Trauma; CON = Conscientiousness; SC = Self-compassion; IMM = Index of Moderated Mediation; CE = conditional effects

***p<.001

Table 7 shows 53.5% of variance in self-compassion accounted by relational betrayal trauma and conscientiousness with $F(3, 237) = 90.827, p < .001$. Results revealed that the relational betrayal trauma was the negative predictor of self-compassion ($b = -.48, p < .001$). Conscientiousness was the significant positive predictor of self-compassion ($b = .24, p = .002$). Relational betrayal trauma and conscientiousness interaction was significant ($b = -.02, p = .001$), suggesting that interaction of relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion depends on conscientiousness. Relational betrayal trauma had stronger significant and negative effect on self-compassion on higher levels of conscientiousness. It is concluded that conscientiousness strengthens the association of relational betrayal trauma with posttraumatic growth. Relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion accounted 37.5% variance in posttraumatic growth with $F(2, 238) = 71.49, p < .001$. Higher self-compassion tends to experience higher levels of posttraumatic growth. The moderated indirect effects of relational betrayal trauma on posttraumatic through self-compassion was significant all values of conscientiousness.

Model 5

Moderated Mediation of Agreeableness



The above model shows moderated mediation of agreeableness on the relationship. Relational betrayal trauma and agreeableness interaction was significant ($b = -.012$, $p = .012$).

Table 8: *Moderated Mediation analysis of Agreeableness on the association of Relational Betrayal Trauma with Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)*

Variable	B	SE	T	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Model 1						
Constant	36.049***	.375	96.04	<.001	35.310	36.789
RBT	-.470***	.029	-15.969	<.001	-.528	-.412
AGR	.302***	.066	4.596	<.001	.173	.432
RBT x AGR	-.012**	.005	-2.535	.012	-.021	-.003
CE of RBT						
Low (-5.719)	-.402	.036	-11.106	.000	-.473	-.330
Mean (.000)	-.470	.029	-15.969	.000	-.528	-.412
High (5.719)	-.539	.043	-12.402	.000	-.624	-.453
Model 2						
Constant	12.21	5.49	2.23	.027	1.406	23.016
RBT	.068	.09	.69	.49	-.126	.262
SC	1.36	.15	9.06	.000	1.063	1.654
CIE						
Low (-5.719)	-.546	.077			-.704	-.401
Mean (.000)	-.639	.095			-.841	-.463
High (5.719)	-.732	.127			-1.007	-.504
IMM	-.016	.008			-.033	-.003

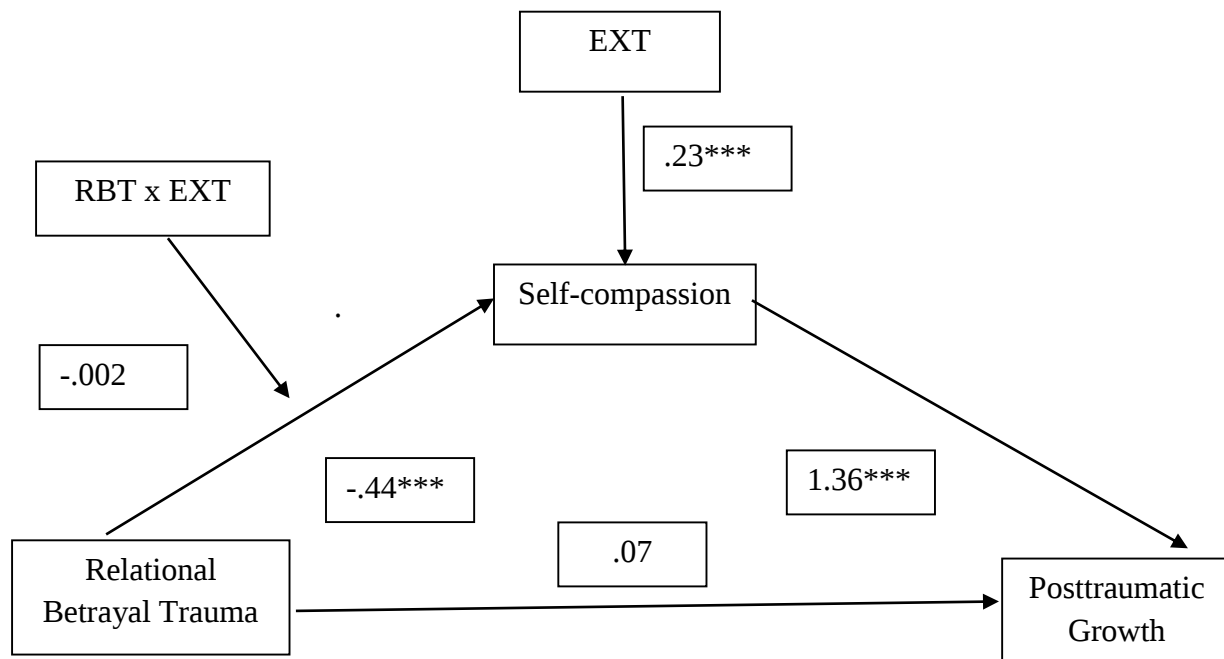
Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT = Relational Betrayal Trauma; AGR =Agreeableness; SC = Self-compassion; IMM = Index of Moderated Mediation; CE = conditional effects; CIE = Conditional indirect effects

Table 8 shows 53.9% of variance in self-compassion accounted by relational betrayal trauma and agreeableness with $F(3, 237) = 92.234, p < .001$. Results revealed that the relational betrayal trauma was a significant negative predictor of self-compassion ($b = -.47, p < .001$). Agreeableness was a significant positive predictor of self-compassion ($b = .302, p < .001$). Relational betrayal trauma and agreeableness interaction was significant ($b = -.012, p = .012$), suggesting that interaction of relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion depends agreeableness. Relational betrayal trauma had stronger significant and negative effect on self-compassion on higher levels of agreeableness. The conditional effects of relational betrayal trauma at different values of agreeableness were significant. At low level of agreeableness, one-unit increase in relational betrayal trauma is associated with .402-unit decrease in self-compassion ($b = -.402, p < .001$). At average level of

conscientiousness, one-unit increase in RBT is associated with .470-unit decrease in self-compassion ($b = -.470, p < .001$). At high level of conscientiousness, one-unit increase in RBT is associated with .539-unit decrease in self-compassion ($b = -.539, p < .001$). It is concluded that agreeableness strengthens the relationship of relational betrayal trauma with posttraumatic growth. Relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion accounted 37.5% of variance in posttraumatic growth with $F(2, 238) = 71.49, p < .001$. The moderated indirect effects of relational betrayal trauma on posttraumatic through self-compassion was significant all values of agreeableness.

Model 6

Moderated Mediation of Extraversion



The above model shows no moderated mediation of extraversion on the relationship. The interaction of relational betrayal trauma and extraversion was insignificant ($b = -.002, p = .785$).

Table 9: *Moderated Mediation Analysis of Extraversion on the association of Relational Betrayal Trauma with Posttraumatic Growth (N = 241)*

Variable	B	SE	t	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Model 1						
Constant	36.031***	.396	91.00	<.001	35.251	36.811
RBT	-.442***	.031	-14.354	<.001	-.502	-.381
EXT	.231***	.081	2.873	.004	.073	.390
RBT x EXT	-.002	.006	-.273	.785	-.013	.010
Model 2						
Constant	12.21**	5.49	2.23	.027	1.406	23.016
RBT	.068	.09	.69	.49	-.126	.262
SC	1.36***	.15	9.06	<.001	1.063	1.654
Conditional indirect effects of RBT on PTG at values of extraversion						
Low (-4.939)	-.589	.088			-.775	-.428
Mean (.000)	-.600	.087			-.778	-.442
High (4.939)	-.611	.104			-.824	-.419
IMM	-.002	.008			-.019	.015

Note. CI = confidence interval; RBT = Relational Betrayal Trauma; EXT =Extraversion; SC = Self-compassion; IMM = Index of Moderated Mediation

***p<.001

Table 9 shows 50.2% of variance accounted for self-compassion by relational betrayal trauma and extraversion Results revealed that the relational betrayal trauma was significant negative predictor of self-compassion (b = -.442, p = .000). Extraversion significantly predict self-compassion (b = .231, p = .004). Relational betrayal trauma and extraversion interaction was insignificant (b = -.002, p = .785), suggesting the effects of relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion did not depend on extraversion. Relational betrayal trauma and self-compassion accounted 37.5% of variance in posttraumatic growth with F (2, 238) = 71.49, p<.001. Self-compassion was significant positive predictor of posttraumatic growth. Extraversion didn't change the strength of association from relational betrayal trauma to posttraumatic growth via self-compassion.

Discussion

Current research directed at exploring the indirect influence of self-compassion on relational betrayal trauma and growth following trauma. Research helped for better understanding of relational betrayal trauma outside the context of intimate relationships and broaden the context of

relational betrayal trauma from romantic to non-romantic relationships; affecting psychological outcome such as self-compassion and growth following trauma.

First proposed hypothesis assumed the mediation of compassion towards oneself on the relation between relational betrayal trauma and posttraumatic growth. Findings of this study are consistent with prior researches that explored adaptive contribution of self-compassion to recover from trauma. Specifically, the individual with higher self-compassion reported not only just reduced the symptoms of trauma but also helped the individual to grow and showed greater adaptation to traumatic events (Cagis & Akce, 2025). According to the research, more self-compassionate people experience more growth following trauma; the high self-compassion acted as a buffer against the trauma symptoms, helped the individual to grow in positive way from trauma (M et al., 2025).

Present study further hypothesized the moderating influence of personality traits on well-documented mediating relationship. This hypothesis was further endorsed by the study since self-compassion had strong bond with personality attributes like agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and extraversion (Neff et al., 2007). Agreeableness and conscientiousness strengthen the relationship of relational betrayal trauma with self-compassion. This suggest that the people who had experienced betrayal trauma and exhibit traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness; have strong tendency to effectively deal with the trauma with empathetic, structured and go-ahead mindset that foster self-compassion. Studies had shown that these personality traits have been linked with better mental health outcomes. Connection among variables guided for the use of therapeutic interventions for enhancing self-compassion. This study emphasized the essentials of therapeutic approaches to help the individuals low in agreeableness and conscientiousness to effectively deal with betrayal trauma and enhance the self-compassion.

The findings revealed that openness to experience, extraversion and neuroticism didn't moderate the association of relational betrayal trauma with posttraumatic via self-compassion. Openness to experience is more related to curiosity, cognitive aspects rather than emotional regulation. Literature showed people with open-mindedness and more curiosity showed higher cognitive functions (Armstrong et al., 2024). A study demonstrated that self-compassion showed a very weak correlation with openness to experience (Yang et al., 2023). It has been suggested by researchers that the individuals with dominant trait of neuroticism showed increased avoidance and rumination as the maladaptive response towards the trauma (Watson & Hubbard, 1996). When the trauma is so intense it overshadows the personality effect.

There may be some factors which contributed to insignificance of moderation analysis. Firstly, it is evident that relational betrayal is deeply personal so the traits being curious and imaginative may be influence the trauma. Second, the relational betrayal trauma can be so intense that it dominates the influence of personality traits. There might be some cultural norms, certain situation and support from society which serves the function of shaping the response of individual towards betrayal beyond personality trait. The study's sample composition may have had an impact on the findings. The participants in this study consisted of young adults, which may differ from clinical populations typically differing in the symptom's composition.

The present research underscores the importance of considering factors as personality traits, self-compassion, and growth following trauma, in assessment or treatment for relational betrayal trauma. Holistic treatment approaches that address these factors in an integrated manner can yield more comprehensive and effective outcomes.

Conclusion

In summary, result of research adds to the corpus knowledge on personality traits, relational betrayal trauma, self-compassion, and growth following trauma. It helps in understanding the indirect effect of self-compassion and moderation of personality traits on the relationship of relational betrayal trauma (non-romantic) and posttraumatic growth. However, it is critical to take into account this study's limitations and carry out additional research.

Implications

Outcomes of present research have practical significance that can inform interventions and strategies aimed at addressing relational betrayal trauma in young adults. These implications are relevant for mental health professionals, clinicians, and individual involved in treatment and support for individuals with relational betrayal trauma.

Future research should include diverse cultural groups to examine the cultural variability and potential cultural-specific factors related to relational betrayal trauma (non-romantic). A deeper understanding of these concepts would result from examining the cultural influences on the study variables.

Conflict of Interest

The authors showed no conflict of interest.

Funding

The authors did not mention any funding for this research.

References

- M, A., M, L., Mjm, S., & T, L. (2025). The protective role of self-compassion in trauma recovery and its moderating impact on post traumatic symptoms and post traumatic growth. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-91819-x>
- Çağış, Z. G., & Akçe, İ. (2025). The role of self-compassion in the relationship of posttraumatic stress disorder with posttraumatic growth in Kahramanmaraş earthquakes survivors: A year on. *Current Psychology*, 44(7), 5379–5387. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-07556-x>
- Zhang, H., Li, J., Sun, B., & Wei, Q. (2023). Effects of Childhood Maltreatment on Self-Compassion: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 24(2), 873–885. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380211043825>
- Tedeschi, R. G. & Calhoun, L. G. (1996). The posttraumatic growth inventory: Measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9, 455-471.
- Tedeschi, R. G., & and Calhoun, L. G. (2004). Posttraumatic Growth: Conceptual Foundations and Empirical Evidence. *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(1), 1–18.
- Neff, K. D. (2003). The Development and Validation of a Scale to Measure Self-Compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2(3), 223–250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309027>
- Akram, F., Qureshi, K., Imtiaz, M., & Idress, M. (2024). Translation, adaptation and validation of Relational Betrayal Trauma Scale in English. *Journal of Asian Development Studies*, 13(4), Article 48. <https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2024.13.4.48>
- Kleber, R. J. (2019). Trauma and Public Mental Health: A Focused Review. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 10, 451. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2019.00451>
- Freyd, J., & Birrell, P. (2013). *Blind to Betrayal: Why We Fool Ourselves We Aren't Being Fooled*. Turner Publishing Company.
- Toyooka, T. (2024). *The relationship of childhood adversity from parental figures and other sources of adversity on shame and self-compassion: An exploratory study* (Publication No. 31299254) [Doctoral dissertation, Barry University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Jankovic, C., Sharp, J., & Thielking, M. (2022). Child maltreatment and post-traumatic growth: Implications for the well-being of young adults. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 131, 105783. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105783>
- Pyszkowska, A. (2020). Personality predictors of self-compassion, ego-resiliency and psychological flexibility in the context of quality of life. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 161, 109932. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.109932>
- Marshall, E.-J., & Brockman, R. N. (2016). The Relationships Between Psychological Flexibility, Self-Compassion, and Emotional Well-Being. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 30(1), 60–72. <https://doi.org/10.1891/0889-8391.30.1.60>
- Armstrong, M., Kaufman, J., Maciarz, J., Sullivan, D., Kim, J., Koppelmans, V., Langenecker, S., & Weisenbach, S. L. (2024). The relationship between personality and cognition in older adults with and without early-onset depression. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 15, 1337320. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2024.1337320>

- Watson, D., & Hubbard, B. (1996). Adaptational Style and Dispositional Structure: Coping in the Context of the Five-Factor Model. *Journal of Personality*, 64(4), 737–774. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1996.tb00943.x>
- Yang, F., Hagiwara, C., Kotani, T., Hirao, J., & Oshio, A. (2023). Comparing self-esteem and self-compassion: An analysis within the big five personality traits framework. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1302197>
- Neff, K. D., Rude, S. S., & Kirkpatrick, K. L. (2007). An examination of self-compassion in relation to positive psychological functioning and personality traits. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 41(4), 908–916. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2006.08.002>
- .