

The Buffering Effect of Self-Compassion on Social Anxiety from Social Demonstration-Avoidance Goal Setting in Early Adolescents



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INTRODUCTION

Early adolescence (10-14):

- Transitional period characterized by social uncertainty, increased focus on peer evaluation^[1] and heightened social anxiety

Social demonstration-avoidance goals



Social anxiety

- Goals set to avoid being perceived as socially incompetent^[2] "I try to avoid doing things that make me look bad to other kids"

Self-Compassion

- Associated with a **reduction** in **anxious feelings**^[3]
- **Inward focus on self-respect**, combatting self-criticism
- Girls: **lower** self-compassion & **higher** social anxiety

Research Questions:

- Can self-compassion be a **buffer** for reducing social anxiety associated with setting demonstration-avoidance goals?
- Can gender **moderate** the direct association?
- Does gender **moderate** the **protectiveness** of self-compassion?

METHODS

Participants:

207 North American early adolescents (54.1% girls, 44.0% boys, 1.9% non-binary or preferred not to answer)

Self-Report Scales:

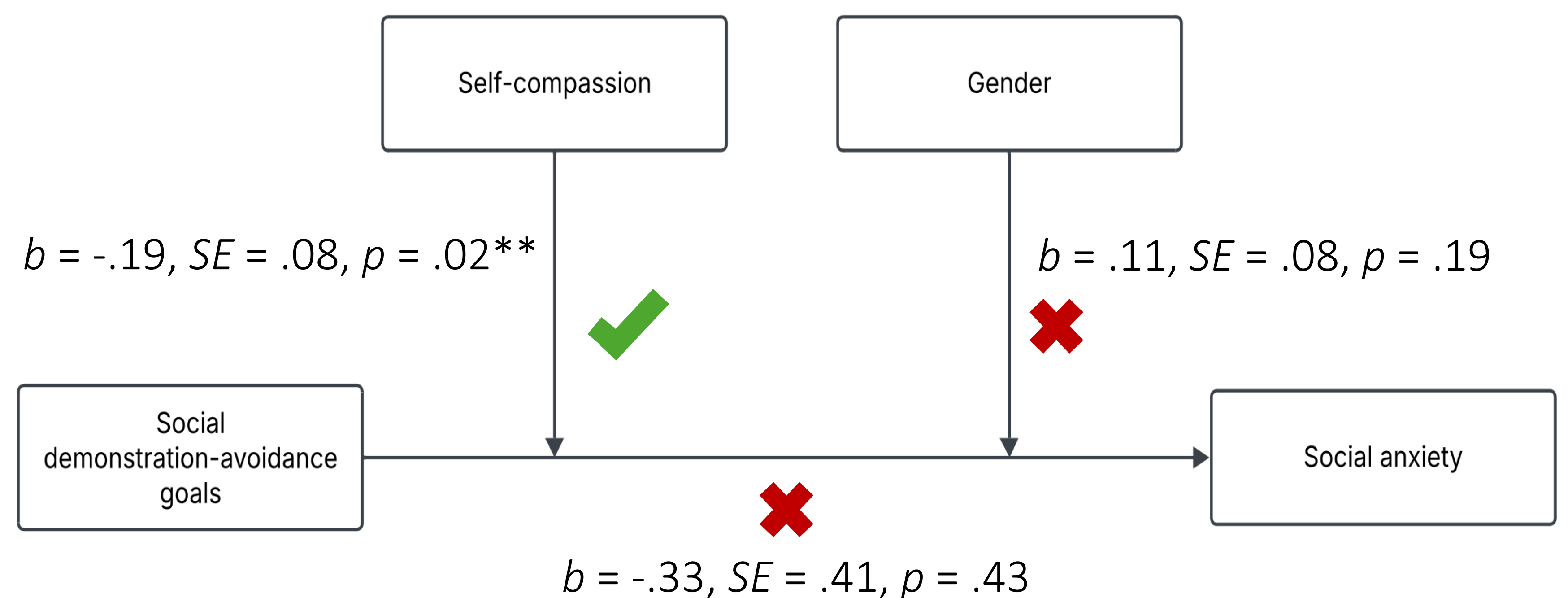
- Self-Compassion Scale Youth Version (Neff et al., 2003)
- Social Anxiety Scale (La Greca & Stone, 1993)
- Social Achievement Goal Questionnaire (Rudolph et al., 2011)

CONCLUSION

1. **Self compassion buffers** the **social anxiety** associated with avoidance goal setting, suggesting it is protective
 - Potential to implement interventions in classrooms
2. Gender **does not influence** the amount of social anxiety experienced from social demonstration-avoidance goal setting
 - Avoidance goal setting has similar outcomes regardless of gender
3. **Self compassion** is a more protective buffer for **girls**
 - Self-compassion targets **rumination**, an internalizing coping strategy more common in **girls**

RESULTS

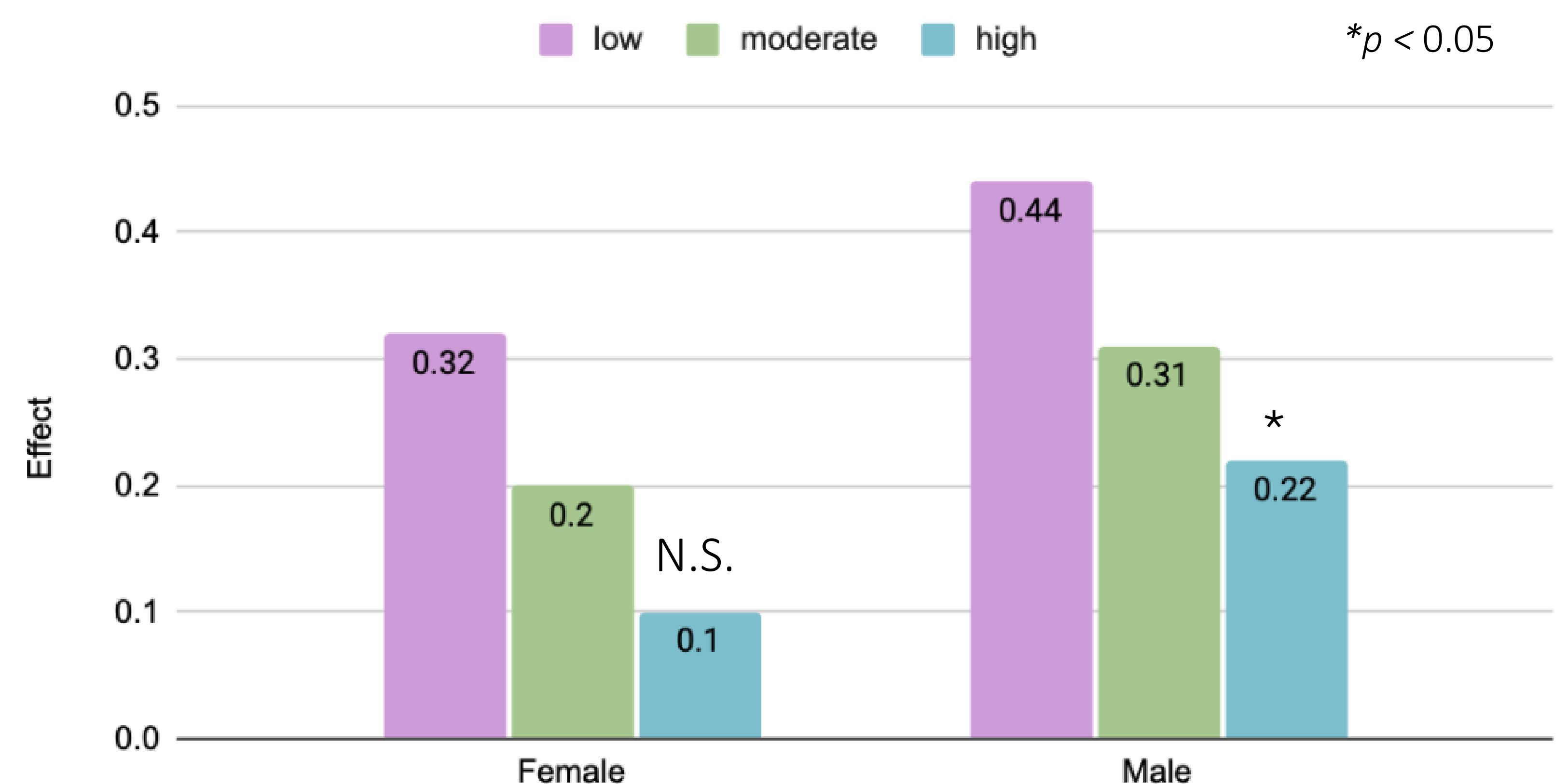
Moderating Effects of Self-Compassion and Gender on Social Anxiety



Social demonstration-avoidance goals do not significantly predict social anxiety

- Gender **does not significantly** moderate this association
- Self-compassion **significantly moderates** this association

Effect of Self-Compassion on Social Anxiety from SDAG By Gender



At high levels of self-compassion, the association becomes **non-significant** for females, while staying significant for males

SELECTED REFERENCES

1. Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-Compassion: An Alternative Conceptualization of a Healthy Attitude Toward Oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2(2), 85–101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309032>
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3. Werner, K. H., Jazaieri, H., Goldin, P. R., Ziv, M., Heimberg, R. G., & Gross, J. J. (2012). Self-compassion and social anxiety disorder. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 25(5), 543-558.