

A Model of Personal Development Based on the Concepts of Self-Compassion, Psychological Wellbeing, and Spiritual Wellbeing in the Context of Counselor Training in Indonesia

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Abstract

Personal development is an important component of counselor education, as professional competence is closely related to the personal readiness and intrapersonal capacity of prospective counselors. Self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being are important dimensions of personal development among prospective counselors. However, research integrating these three constructs into a personal development model, particularly within the context of counselor education in Indonesia, remains limited. This study aimed to examine the structural relationships between personal development and self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being among prospective counselors in Indonesia. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design was employed. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model was evaluated through outer loadings, composite reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, while the structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, bootstrapping, R^2 , and f^2 . The results showed positive and significant relationships between personal development and psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.266$; $p = 0.017$), self-compassion ($\beta = 0.367$; $p < 0.001$), and spiritual well-being ($\beta = 0.321$; $p < 0.001$). The strongest relationship was found between personal development and self-compassion. However, the R^2 values indicated relatively low explanatory power, with values of 7.1% for psychological well-being, 13.5% for self-compassion, and 10.3% for spiritual well-being. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening personal development in counselor education as part of efforts to enhance the personal readiness of prospective counselors. Nevertheless, the three outcomes are also influenced by other factors beyond the research model.

Keywords: Counselor Education, Personal Development, Psychological Well-Being, Self-Compassion, Spiritual Well-Being

INTRODUCTION

Personal development is a fundamental component of counselor education, as professional competence cannot be separated from personal competence. Professional counseling associations emphasize that counselors must possess self-awareness, emotional regulation, psychological well-being, and spiritual maturity as a foundations for establishing ethical and effective counseling relationships (American Counseling Association, 2014; Corey, 2022). In the context of counselor education in Indonesia, the need for a

comprehensive personal development model is increasing in line with the growing complexity of counselors' roles in educational, community, and mental health settings. Recent studies also highlight that strengthening intrapersonal aspects is a key predictor of counselor effectiveness in contemporary practice (Ibrahim & Alkaff, 2023; Setyawan, 2024).

One important aspect of personal development among counselor trainees is self-compassion. Neff (2003) defines self-compassion as comprising of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, and it has been shown to reduce psychological distress, enhance emotional balance, and strengthen interpersonal relationships. Previous studies indicate that counseling students with higher levels of self-compassion tend to demonstrate greater empathy, lower levels of burnout, and more effective therapeutic relationships (Beaumont et al., 2015; Finlay et al., 2015; Kotera et al., 2022). In counselor training, self-compassion helps individuals accept their limitations, face mistakes with greater courage, and improve the quality of their professional presence.

In addition, psychological well-being is an essential indicator of counselor readiness. Ryff's (1989) eudaimonic model emphasizes that psychological well-being consists of dimensions such as self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, positive relations, and environmental mastery. Psychological well-being has direct implications for counselors' ability to regulate emotions, make ethical decisions, and maintain stable counseling relationships (Keyes, 2002). Recent studies in counselor education suggest that psychological well-being is a fundamental element in determining the quality of counseling services. In this context, the development of inner strengths through spirituality, self-acceptance, and resilience is crucial in helping future practitioners manage professional stress, prevent burnout, and find intrinsic meaning in their careers (Gilarcorbi et al., 2024; Muqodas et al., 2020).

Within the Indonesian context, which is characterized by strong religiosity and multicultural values, spiritual well-being is also a crucial dimension of personal development. Ellison (1983) and Fisher (2011) describe spiritual well-being as encompassing dimensions of meaning, purpose, connectedness, and transcendence. Healthy spirituality has been shown to enhance empathy, moral balance, emotional stability, and sensitivity to human values, all of which are essential qualities in counseling practice (Pargament, 2007). Research also indicates that spiritual well-being contributes to strengthening resilience and coping abilities among counselor trainees (Rahman & Amalia, 2022).

Although self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being have been widely recognized as contributing to the development of effective counselors, studies that integrate these three constructs into a comprehensive personal development model remain limited, particularly in the Indonesian context. Furthermore, counselor education curricula in many higher education institutions tend to focus more on academic and technical competencies, while the development of students' intrapersonal capacities lacks a systematic framework grounded in contemporary empirical research and theory (Sunardi, 2022). This condition creates a gap between professional demands placed on counselors and the personal readiness of students.

Therefore, this study is important because it seeks to propose an integrated personal development model that incorporates self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being within the context of counselor education in Indonesia. The novelty of this research lies in the synthesis of these three constructs into a unified and applicable conceptual framework. The proposed model is expected not only to strengthen the theoretical foundation of counselor education but also to provide practical contributions to curriculum development, educational interventions, and policies aimed at enhancing the personal competencies of counselor trainees. Ultimately, counselor education in Indonesia is expected to produce professionals who are

not only technically competent but also personally mature and capable of delivering holistic, ethical, and high-quality counseling services.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the structural relationships among personal development, self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being among prospective counselors. The proposed research model is presented in Figure 1.

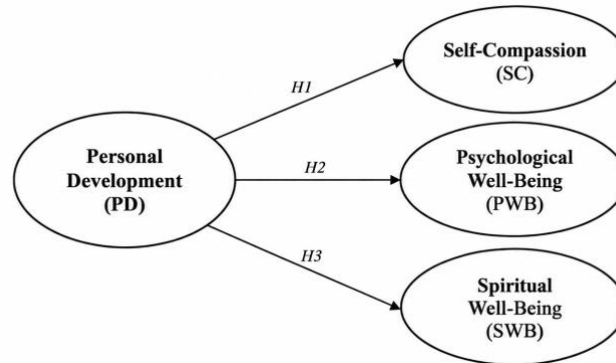


Figure 1. Design

This design was selected because it enables the simultaneous examination of relationships among latent constructs using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of how personal development is related to psychological and spiritual well-being, both directly and indirectly through self-compassion.

The target population comprised undergraduate students enrolled in Guidance and Counseling programs at higher education institutions across Indonesia who had completed school-based field practice, including the School Field Introduction Program (PLP), Teaching Practicum Program (PPL), or internship placements. These students were selected because they had acquired practical experience in delivering guidance and counseling services, making them appropriate participants for the objectives of this study.

Table 1. Data Demographics

Characteristic	Category	n
Geographical Region	Java	127
	Sumatra	32
	Kalimantan	17
	Sulawesi	17
	Bali and Nusa Tenggara	11
	Maluku and Papua	7
Gender	Female	165
	Male	46
Age (years)	20	28
	21	62
	22	68
	23	42
	24	11

Field Practice Experience	PLP	86
	PPL	78
	PKM	47
Total		211

A quota sampling technique based on Indonesia's geographical regions was employed to obtain representation from different parts of the country. The sampling quotas were established by considering the distribution of Guidance and Counseling study programs across Indonesia, with the following allocation: Java (60%; $n = 127$), Sumatra (15%; $n = 32$), Kalimantan (8%; $n = 17$), Sulawesi (8%; $n = 17$), Bali and Nusa Tenggara (5%; $n = 11$), and Maluku and Papua (4%; $n = 7$). Participants were eligible if they (1) were active undergraduate students enrolled in a Guidance and Counseling program, (2) had completed PLP, PPL, or PKM, (3) voluntarily agreed to participate by providing informed consent, and (4) completed all research instruments. A total of 211 students met these criteria and were included in the final analysis. This sample size was considered adequate for SEM-PLS analysis, as it was deemed to meet the recommended minimum sample size requirements for estimating complex structural models (Hair et al., 2022).

Data were collected online using a Google Forms questionnaire. Before completing the survey, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, data confidentiality, and their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. All participants provided informed consent prior to completing the questionnaire. The study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for research involving human participants, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and the exclusive use of data for academic purposes.

The instruments used in this study were based on empirically validated measures commonly applied in psychology and counseling research. Self-compassion was measured using the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) developed by Neff (2003), which has been adapted for use in the Indonesian context. Psychological well-being was assessed using Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989), reflecting the eudaimonic perspective of well-being. Spiritual well-being was measured using the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) developed by Ellison (1983), which includes both religious and existential dimensions. Personal development was measured using a self-development scale developed by the researchers based on theoretical frameworks of personal growth in counselor education. All instruments underwent language adaptation and feasibility testing prior to use and demonstrated acceptable reliability based on internal consistency analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. This approach was chosen due to its suitability for analyzing complex models involving multiple latent constructs and its flexibility regarding data distribution assumptions.

The analysis was conducted in two main stages. The first stage involved the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model), which aimed to assess the quality of the instruments by examining convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability, ensuring that each indicator accurately and consistently represented its corresponding latent construct.

The second stage involved the evaluation of the structural model (inner model), which aimed to test the relationships among the variables in the research model. This stage included the assessment of the model's predictive power, the estimation of path coefficients, and the testing of the significance of relationships using bootstrapping procedures. Through these analyses, the proposed hypotheses were empirically tested to determine the structural relationships among personal development, self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 2. Outer Loadings

Construct (Laten Variable)	Number of Valid Indicator	Susceptible to Outer Loading	CR	AVE
Self-Compassion (SC)	16	0.794-0.849	0.955	0.552
Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)	5	0.701-0.717	0.933	0.541
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	18	0.701 – 0.823	0.968	0.656
Personal Development (PD)	21	0.720-0.776	0.970	0.523

Based on the measurement model evaluation presented in Table 2, all indicators across the four constructs demonstrated outer loading values of at least 0.70, ranging from 0.701 to 0.849. These results indicate that each indicator adequately represents its respective latent construct. The Self-Compassion (SC) construct consisted of 16 valid indicators with outer loading values ranging from 0.794 to 0.849. Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) consisted of 5 valid indicators with values ranging from 0.701 to 0.717, while Psychological Well-Being (PWB) consisted of 18 valid indicators with values ranging from 0.701 to 0.823. Personal Development (PD) consisted of 21 valid indicators with outer loading values ranging from 0.720 to 0.776.

Furthermore, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs ranged from 0.933 to 0.970, indicating high internal consistency. The highest CR value was observed for Personal Development (PD) at 0.970, while the lowest was found for Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) at 0.933. All CR values exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that the constructs demonstrated satisfactory reliability.

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.523 to 0.656, with all values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. This indicates that each construct accounted for more than 50% of the variance in its indicators. Therefore, based on the outer loading, Composite Reliability, and AVE results, all constructs met the recommended criteria for convergent validity and construct reliability and were considered suitable for further structural model analysis.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Personal Development (PD)	0.968	0.969	0.970	0.523
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.965	0.867	0.968	0.656
Self-Compassion (SC)	0.952	0.955	0.955	0.552
Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)	0.925	0.926	0.933	0.541

The results of the construct reliability and validity assessment presented in Table 3 indicate that all four constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity. The Cronbach's Alpha values for Personal Development (PD), Psychological Well-Being (PWB), Self-Compassion (SC), and Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) were 0.968, 0.965, 0.952, and 0.925, respectively. All values exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating high internal consistency among the indicators within each construct.

The rho_A values were 0.969 for PD, 0.867 for PWB, 0.955 for SC, and 0.926 for SWB. These values were also above the recommended threshold of 0.70, supporting the reliability of all constructs. Similarly, the Composite Reliability values were 0.970 for PD, 0.968 for PWB, 0.955 for SC, and 0.933 for SWB. These results further confirm that all constructs demonstrated good internal consistency reliability.

The AVE values were 0.523 for PD, 0.656 for PWB, 0.552 for SC, and 0.541 for SWB. Since all AVE values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, the four constructs satisfied the criterion for convergent validity. Overall, the results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that Personal Development, Psychological Well-Being, Self-Compassion, and Spiritual Well-Being have adequate reliability and convergent validity. Therefore, the measurement model can be considered acceptable for subsequent structural model evaluation.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity with Fornell-Larcke Criteria

	Personal Development (PD)	Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	Self- Compassion (SC)	Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)
Personal Development (PD)	0.723			
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.266	0.810		
Self-Compassion (SC)	0.367	0.332	0.652	
Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)	0.321	0.252	0.353	0.642

The assessment of discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion indicates that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs in the model. For instance, the value for personal development (0.723) exceeds its correlations with psychological well-being (0.266), self-compassion (0.367), and spiritual well-being (0.321). A similar pattern is observed for psychological well-being (0.810), self-compassion (0.652), and spiritual well-being (0.642), whose diagonal values (square root of AVE) are consistently higher than the inter-construct correlations. These findings confirm that all latent variables in the model personal development, psychological well-being, self-compassion, and spiritual well-being demonstrate adequate discriminant validity. This indicates that each construct represents a distinct concept, consistent with the theoretical framework of personal development among counselor trainees in Indonesia.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity with Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Criteria

	Personal Development (PD)	Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	Self-Compassion (SC)
Personal Development (PD)			
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	0.267		
Self-Compassion (SC)	0.358	0.348	
Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)	0.330	0.268	0.370

The assessment of discriminant validity using the Heterotrait Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) indicates that all reported HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.90. This result suggests that each construct personal development, psychological well-being, self-compassion, and spiritual well-being is empirically distinct from one another.

Therefore, it can be concluded that discriminant validity has been established in this study, indicating that each construct adequately captures a unique aspect in accordance with its underlying theoretical framework.

Table 6. Outer VIF

Construct	VIF Value Range	Explanation
Personal Development (PD)	2.638-3.548	There is no multicollinearity
Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	1.575-3.548	There is no multicollinearity
Self-Compassion (SC)	1.462-1.920	There is no multicollinearity
Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)	1.837-2.815	There is no multicollinearity

The results of the outer Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) analysis indicate that the personal development (X1) construct has VIF values ranging from 2.638 to 3.548, psychological well-being (X2) ranges from 1.575 to 2.318, self-compassion (X3) ranges from 1.462 to 1.920, and spiritual well-being (Y) ranges from 1.837 to 2.815. All VIF values are below the recommended threshold of 5, indicating that there are no multicollinearity issues among the indicators. Therefore, each indicator can be considered sufficiently independent and appropriate to be retained in the measurement model.

Table 7. Inner VIF

Dependent Construct	Personal Development (PD)	Psychological Well-Being (PWB)	Self-Compassion (SC)	Spiritual Well-Being (SWB)
Personal Development (PD)	-	1.000	1.000	1.000

The results of the inner VIF analysis indicate that all latent constructs have VIF values of 1.000. This suggests that there is no multicollinearity among the independent constructs in the structural model. In other words, the structural model demonstrates good internal validity, as the relationships among the exogenous variables do not interfere with or distort one another.

Table 8. Path Coefficient + Bootstrapping (t-stat, p-value)

Connection	Coefficient (O)	T-Stat	P-Value	Conclusion
PD → PWB	0.266	2.399	0.017	Significant
PD → SC	0.367	4.863	0.000	Significant
PD → SWB	0.321	4.342	0.000	Significant

The results of the structural model analysis presented in Table 8 indicate that Personal Development (PD) has a positive and significant relationship with Psychological Well-Being (PWB), Self-Compassion (SC), and Spiritual Well-Being (SWB). Specifically, PD is positively associated with PWB ($\beta = 0.266$, $t = 2.399$, $p = 0.017$), indicating that higher levels of personal development are associated with better psychological well-being. PD also demonstrates a positive and significant relationship with SC ($\beta = 0.367$, $t = 4.863$, $p < 0.001$), while its relationship with SWB is also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.321$, $t = 4.342$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that all proposed structural relationships are statistically significant.

Among the three relationships, the strongest association is observed between Personal Development and Self-Compassion ($\beta = 0.367$), followed by Spiritual Well-Being ($\beta = 0.321$) and Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = 0.266$). This pattern suggests that personal development may be particularly relevant to the development of a compassionate orientation toward oneself among prospective counselors. The relatively stronger relationship between personal development and self-compassion is theoretically meaningful because personal development involves processes of self-awareness, personal growth, and the development of adaptive ways of responding to personal experiences. These processes may provide a foundation for individuals to recognize their limitations and difficulties without excessive self-criticism. In the context of counselor education, this finding highlights the importance of personal development not only as a component of professional preparation but also as a potential foundation for cultivating a more compassionate attitude toward oneself.

Table 9. R^2 , f^2

Dependent Variable	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	Category	f^2 (dari PD)	Category
PWB	0.071	0.066	Weak	0.076	Small
SC	0.135	0.130	Weak-Moderate	0.155	Medium
SWB	0.103	0.098	Weak	0.115	Small-Medium

The results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) and effect size (f^2) presented in Table 9 provide an overview of the explanatory power and effect magnitude of Personal Development (PD) on the three endogenous variables. The R^2 values indicate that Personal Development explains 7.1% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being (PWB), 13.5% of the variance in Self-Compassion (SC), and 10.3% of the variance in Spiritual Well-Being (SWB). These values indicate relatively low explanatory power, suggesting that although Personal Development has statistically significant relationships with all three outcomes, it explains only a limited proportion of their variance. Therefore, the three outcomes are likely influenced by other factors that are not included in the current model.

The f^2 results provide further information regarding the magnitude of the effect of Personal Development on each endogenous construct. The effect size of PD on PWB was 0.076, indicating a small effect, while the effect size on SC was 0.155, indicating a medium effect. Meanwhile, the effect size of PD on SWB was 0.115, indicating a small-to-medium effect. These findings indicate that the strongest contribution of Personal Development is observed in Self-Compassion, consistent with the path coefficient results presented in Table 7. Although the explanatory power of the model is relatively low, the significant structural relationships and effect size results indicate that Personal Development remains a relevant construct in understanding Self-Compassion, Psychological Well-Being, and Spiritual Well-Being among prospective counselors. However, these findings should not be interpreted as indicating that Personal Development is the primary determinant of these outcomes, given the relatively low R^2 values.

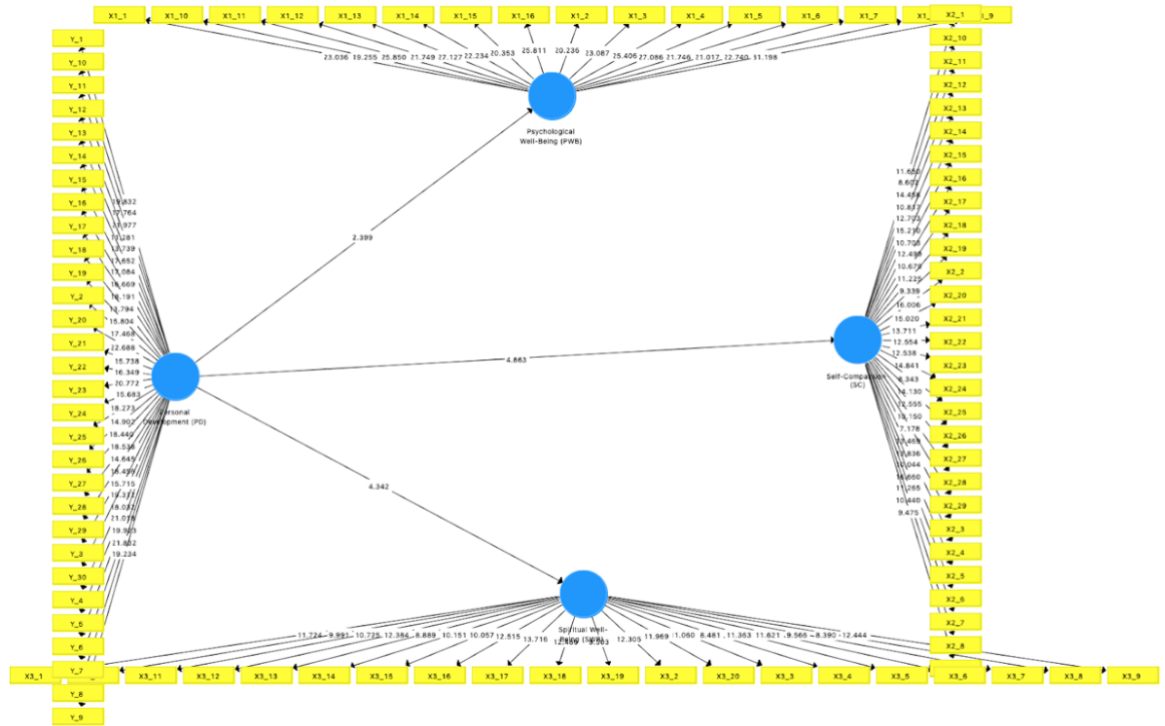


Figure 1. PLS-SEM Structural Model

Figure X illustrates the final PLS-SEM structural model, showing the relationships between Personal Development and the three endogenous constructs: Psychological Well-Being, Self-Compassion, and Spiritual Well-Being. The figure also presents the measurement indicators associated with each latent construct. The detailed results of the structural relationships, including path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values, are presented in Table 7, while the explanatory power and effect sizes are reported in Table 9.

Discussion

Personal Development and Psychological Well-Being

The findings demonstrate a positive and significant relationship between Personal Development (PD) and Psychological Well-Being (PWB) ($\beta = 0.266$, $t = 2.399$, $p = 0.017$). This finding indicates that students with higher levels of personal development tend to report better psychological well-being. From a theoretical perspective, personal development involves an individual's active engagement in self-awareness, self-improvement, and the development of personal potential. These processes are closely related to the eudaimonic perspective of well-being, which emphasizes personal growth, purpose, and optimal psychological functioning.

This finding is consistent with recent research on Personal Growth Initiative (PGI), a related construct that emphasizes active and intentional engagement in personal growth. A meta-analysis of college students found that PGI was significantly associated with various adaptive psychological factors, suggesting that intentional personal growth is relevant to positive functioning among university students (Jiao et al., 2024). Similarly, Weigold et al. (2021) demonstrated that college can function as an important context for intentional personal growth, particularly when students experience environments that support psychological needs and personal development. More recent research has also shown that PGI is associated with coping styles, coping

strategies, and self-efficacy among college students, further indicating the relevance of intentional growth processes to adaptive psychological functioning (Weigold et al., 2024).

The positive relationship between PD and PWB may be explained by the developmental function of personal growth. Students who actively engage in personal development may be more likely to evaluate their experiences, identify areas for improvement, establish meaningful goals, and develop adaptive strategies for dealing with challenges. Such processes may support a greater sense of competence, purpose, and personal growth, which are important components of psychological well-being. Recent evidence also suggests that personal growth processes are associated with positive well-being outcomes among college students. For example, Ju et al. (2025) found that PGI was involved in the pathway linking strength-based parenting to subjective well-being among Chinese college students.

However, the relationship observed in the present study should be interpreted cautiously. The effect size of PD on PWB was relatively small ($f^2 = 0.076$), and PD explained only 7.1% of the variance in PWB. Therefore, personal development should not be regarded as the primary determinant of psychological well-being. Rather, it represents one relevant factor within a broader set of psychological, interpersonal, and contextual factors that may contribute to students' well-being.

Personal Development and Self-Compassion

The strongest structural relationship in the present study was observed between Personal Development and Self-Compassion (SC) ($\beta = 0.367$, $t = 4.863$, $p < 0.001$). The corresponding effect size was also the largest among the three endogenous variables ($f^2 = 0.155$), while PD explained 13.5% of the variance in SC. This finding suggests that personal development may be particularly relevant to how students develop a compassionate orientation toward themselves.

The relationship can be understood through the reflective nature of personal development. Personal development requires individuals to recognize their strengths, limitations, experiences, and areas requiring improvement. When this process occurs in an adaptive manner, individuals may be more capable of acknowledging personal difficulties without responding with excessive self-criticism. This process is conceptually compatible with self-compassion, which involves responding to one's own difficulties with kindness, balanced awareness, and an understanding that personal struggles are part of the human experience.

Recent research supports the relevance of self-compassion to positive functioning among university students. Cowand et al. (2024), for example, found that self-compassion was associated with improved well-being and healthier stress-related psychological profiles among undergraduate students. Their findings indicate that students who respond to themselves with greater compassion may be better able to manage psychological challenges and maintain positive functioning.

At the same time, recent evidence suggests that the relationship between personal growth and self-compassion may be more complex than a simple one-directional relationship. Laliberte et al. (2024) examined self-compassion and personal growth initiative and highlighted the relevance of self-compassion within processes of personal growth. Similarly, research among university students has examined self-compassion as a predictor of personal growth initiative, suggesting that self-compassion itself may facilitate individuals' willingness to engage in intentional personal development. Therefore, the present finding may be interpreted as part of a potentially reciprocal relationship between personal development and self-compassion rather than as evidence of a purely unidirectional process.

This finding has particular relevance for counselor education. Prospective counselors are expected to develop not only professional knowledge and counseling skills but also self-awareness and emotional maturity. Personal development that encourages reflective self-evaluation may provide an important foundation for

developing a compassionate attitude toward oneself. Such an internal stance may be valuable for counselors because professional practice requires individuals to recognize their own limitations while maintaining psychological openness and responsiveness toward others.

Nevertheless, because the present study used a non-experimental structural model, the significant path from PD to SC should not be interpreted as evidence that personal development causes an increase in self-compassion. Longitudinal research is needed to determine whether personal development and self-compassion influence each other over time.

Personal Development and Spiritual Well-Being

The findings also demonstrate a positive and significant relationship between Personal Development and Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) ($\beta = 0.321$, $t = 4.342$, $p < 0.001$). The effect size of PD on SWB was 0.115, while PD explained 10.3% of the variance in SWB. This finding suggests that personal development is associated not only with psychological functioning but also with the spiritual dimension of students' well-being.

One possible explanation is that personal development involves reflection on personal values, life direction, meaning, and purpose. Through such processes, students may develop greater clarity regarding what they consider meaningful and valuable in their lives. Spiritual well-being is similarly concerned with meaning, purpose, harmony, and one's relationship with oneself, others, the environment, or the transcendent. Leung and Pong (2021), for example, found that spiritual well-being was significantly associated with psychological health among university students. Their findings demonstrated that the domains of spiritual well-being were negatively associated with depression, anxiety, and stress, indicating that spiritual well-being represents an important dimension of students' positive functioning.

The present finding may therefore be understood through the possibility that personal development provides students with opportunities for self-reflection and the exploration of meaning and purpose. This interpretation is also consistent with recent research showing that personal growth processes among college students are connected with broader dimensions of positive psychological functioning (Jiao et al., 2024; Verdoodt et al., 2026). However, the relationship between personal development and spiritual well-being should not be assumed to be universal, as spirituality and spiritual well-being can be expressed differently across cultural and religious contexts.

The relatively modest R^2 value should also be considered. Personal Development explains only 10.3% of the variance in SWB, indicating that spiritual well-being is likely shaped by other factors that were not included in the present model. These may include meaning in life, social relationships, religious or spiritual practices, family influences, and broader cultural experiences. Therefore, personal development should be regarded as one relevant factor associated with spiritual well-being rather than its sole determinant.

Comparative Interpretation of the Three Structural Relationships

An important finding of this study is the variation in the magnitude of the three structural relationships. Personal Development demonstrated the strongest relationship with Self-Compassion ($\beta = 0.367$), followed by Spiritual Well-Being ($\beta = 0.321$) and Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = 0.266$). The same pattern was observed in the effect-size analysis, with the largest f^2 value occurring for Self-Compassion (0.155), followed by Spiritual Well-Being (0.115) and Psychological Well-Being (0.076).

The stronger relationship between PD and SC may indicate that personal development is particularly closely related to the way students respond to their own limitations, difficulties, and developmental challenges. Personal development requires individuals to identify areas for change, whereas self-compassion may provide

a supportive internal context for engaging in such change without excessive self-criticism. Recent research has emphasized that PGI involves active and intentional participation in personal growth and is associated with multiple adaptive psychosocial factors among college students (Jiao et al., 2024; Weigold et al., 2024). Furthermore, a recent systematic review found that PGI is associated with a broad range of psychosocial outcomes, although the evidence remains heterogeneous and further longitudinal research is needed (Verdoodt et al., 2026).

Taken together, the findings suggest that personal development may have particular relevance to students' relationship with themselves, as reflected in the comparatively stronger PD–SC relationship. This finding is especially important in counselor education because counselor development involves an integration of professional knowledge, interpersonal competencies, and personal growth. Developing a compassionate relationship with oneself may provide a psychological foundation for engaging in continuous professional development while acknowledging personal limitations.

Explanatory Power of the Model

Despite the statistically significant relationships identified in the structural model, the R^2 values indicate relatively low explanatory power. Personal Development explained 7.1% of the variance in Psychological Well-Being, 13.5% of the variance in Self-Compassion, and 10.3% of the variance in Spiritual Well-Being. These findings indicate that the three outcomes may also be associated with multiple factors beyond personal development.

The relatively low R^2 values do not necessarily diminish the importance of the significant relationships. Rather, they indicate that personal development represents only one component within a broader network of psychological, interpersonal, developmental, and contextual factors. This interpretation is consistent with the recent systematic review by Verdoodt et al. (2026), which found that PGI is associated with numerous psychosocial factors and emphasized that the existing evidence remains heterogeneous. The authors also highlighted the need for longitudinal studies and more diverse samples to better understand the dynamics surrounding personal growth.

Therefore, the present findings should be interpreted as demonstrating that Personal Development is a significant but limited predictor within the propose model of Psychological Well-Being, Self-Compassion, and Spiritual Well-Being. Personal Development should not be positioned as the primary determinant of these outcomes. Future studies may develop a more comprehensive model by incorporating other variables such as social support, meaning in life, resilience, self-efficacy, emotion regulation, and spiritual or religious engagement.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the structural relationships between Personal Development (PD), Psychological Well-Being (PWB), Self-Compassion (SC), and Spiritual Well-Being (SWB) among prospective counselors. The findings demonstrate that Personal Development has positive and significant structural relationships with all three endogenous constructs, specifically PWB ($\beta = 0.266, p = 0.017$), SC ($\beta = 0.367, p < 0.001$), and SWB ($\beta = 0.321, p < 0.001$), with the strongest association observed between Personal Development and Self-Compassion, followed by Spiritual Well-Being and Psychological Well-Being. Personal Development also demonstrated the greatest effect size on Self-Compassion ($f^2 = 0.155$), compared with Spiritual Well-Being ($f^2 = 0.115$) and Psychological Well-Being ($f^2 = 0.076$). However, the relatively low R^2 values for PWB (0.071), SC (0.135), and SWB (0.103) indicate that Personal Development explains only a limited proportion of the variance in these outcomes. Thus, Personal Development can be considered a relevant psychological factor

associated with students' well-being and self-compassion, but not the primary determinant of these outcomes. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of personal development within counselor education, particularly in fostering a compassionate relationship with oneself, and suggest that strengthening personal development may be valuable as part of the broader preparation of prospective counselors. Nevertheless, given the limited explanatory power of the model and the non-experimental nature of the study, future research should examine additional psychological, interpersonal, and contextual factors and employ longitudinal designs to better understand the relationships among personal development, self-compassion, psychological well-being, and spiritual well-being.

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