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# Self-compassion and death distress among individuals affected by the February 6, 2023, Türkiye Earthquake: The mediating role of doomscrolling and resilience

**Yağmur Kaya[1], Naile Osmanoğlu[2], Seydi Ahmet Satıcı[1] and M Engin Deniz[1]**

## Abstract

Large-scale events like natural disasters and epidemics can have significant impacts on individuals' mental health worldwide. Thus, it is crucial to examine the psychological effects of such events on people. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between self-compassion, death distress, doomscrolling, and resilience, among individuals affected by earthquakes. A total of 364 Turkish adults affected by the earthquakes that occurred in Türkiye on February 6, 2023, participated in the study. Structural equation modeling was utilized to explore the mediating roles of doomscrolling and resilience in the association between self-compassion and death distress. The results of the structural equation modeling indicated that both doomscrolling and resilience mediated the relationship between self-compassion and death distress in earthquake-affected individuals. These findings contribute to understanding the interplay between self-compassion, death distress, doomscrolling, and resilience in the context of earthquakes and are expected to inform future research endeavors.

## Keywords

death distress, doomscrolling, earthquake, resilience, self-compassion

## Introduction

On February 6, 2023, Türkiye experienced two devastating earthquakes measuring magnitudes 7.7 and 7.6, respectively. These seismic events, accompanied by numerous aftershocks, marked the most destructive earthquakes in the nation's history. Striking across 11 provinces, the earthquakes affected approximately 15 million people, resulting in a tragic loss of over 40,000 lives, with tens of thousands sustaining injuries and extensive devastation to cities (AFAD, 2023). Approximately 26,000 buildings were razed to the ground, while 215,000 structures suffered severe damage or complete destruction

[1]Yıldız Technical University, Türkiye
[2]Istanbul Medipol University, Türkiye

**Corresponding author:**
Yağmur Kaya, Department of Psychological Counselling, Faculty of Education, Yıldız Technical University, Istanbul 34220, Türkiye.
Email: ykaya@yildiz.edu.tr

(CSB, 2023). Thousands of individuals were displaced from their homes, and many experienced the loss of loved ones (Yıldız et al., 2023). Given the profound impact of earthquakes on individuals, it becomes imperative to comprehend the potential psychosocial ramifications and identify factors that could mitigate their adverse effects on psychological well-being, especially for those directly or indirectly affected by such catastrophic natural disasters.

## *Self-compassion and death distress*

Traumatic events of considerable magnitude often influence individuals' perceptions and behaviors toward mortality. While death is an inevitable facet of human existence, it can evoke various challenges such as sorrow and distress (Dadfar and Lester, 2020). Within the realm of death-related distress, three primary components emerge: death obsession, death depression, and death anxiety (Dadfar and Lester, 2020). Death obsession entails persistent fixation on thoughts of mortality, while death depression encompasses profound sadness following loss, and death anxiety entails negative attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts concerning mortality (Abdel-Khalek, 2012). These facets of death-related distress may exacerbate among trauma survivors (Yıldırım and Güler, 2021). Furthermore, although death anxiety is inherent in all individuals, it may intensify during major events such as earthquakes, pandemics, or tsunamis, where a substantial number of fatalities occur (Boukhary et al., 2024; Güder et al., 2024). The loss of loved ones due to earthquakes or exposure to such fatalities through media coverage can instigate feelings of death anxiety, trigger death-related depression, or evoke contemplation on mortality (Games and Sari, 2020; Wenchao, 2020). Moreover, given the substantial casualties resulting from catastrophic disasters like the February 6, 2023 earthquakes, individuals left behind may grapple with heightened death distress (Dal Zilio and Ampuero, 2023). Therefore, it is plausible that individuals affected by the earthquakes in Türkiye may experience an escalation in death distress, potentially influenced by factors such as self-compassion.

Self-compassion entails endeavors to alleviate one's own suffering during times of distress, contrasting with the tendency to overlook or suppress suffering by extending compassion toward oneself, acknowledging and accepting the experience of distress (Neff, 2003a). Following calamitous events such as earthquakes, individuals may endure significant distress. As an adaptive coping mechanism, self-compassion facilitates (a) resilience against the adverse impact of traumatic events and (b) effective management of negative emotions (Liu et al., 2021a, 2021b, 2023). Additionally, individuals with heightened self-compassion typically exhibit fewer death-related thoughts (Kavaklı et al., 2020; Yousefi Afrashteh and Masoumi, 2021). According to terror management theory, death distress underlies a multitude of human behaviors. It argues that people can be protected from death distress by strengthening protective factors such as self-compassion and self-esteem (Pyszczynski et al., 2015). However, individuals possessing robust psychological resources may experience diminished distress in the face of mortality-related stimuli (Yıldırım and Güler, 2021). Considering self-compassion as one such psychological resource, and the likelihood of earthquake-affected individuals experiencing death distress, self-compassion could play a pivotal role in shaping their psychological responses.

## *Doomscrolling and resilience*

In the aftermath of the February 6, 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, the traumatic aftermath profoundly impacted not only survivors and bereaved individuals but also those who witnessed the catastrophe unfold through various media platforms. Following adverse life events, individuals tend to increase their social media usage, actively seeking information and updates

through online channels (Kartol et al., 2023). The concept of "doomscrolling," which emerged during the 2020 pandemic, involves compulsively scrolling through negative news on social media platforms, even when it contributes to feelings of hopelessness and unhappiness (Sharma et al., 2022). Despite being aware of its adverse emotional effects, individuals often spend more time consuming negative news on their digital devices following traumatic events such as earthquakes and pandemics (Rodrigues, 2022; Taskin et al., 2024). Seeking information serves as a coping mechanism to adapt to evolving life circumstances (Buchanan et al., 2021; Satıcı, 2020), driven by the discomfort of uncertainty (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2021). Self-compassion, as an adaptive coping strategy, is anticipated to serve as a protective factor by mitigating individuals' inclination toward consuming negative news excessively. Conversely, individuals lacking self-compassion may be predisposed to engaging in doomscrolling behaviors, thereby exposing themselves to adverse effects of negative news (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2021). These individuals may find themselves seeking more negative information to adapt to changing life circumstances, especially in the context of traumatic experiences (Kartol et al., 2023). Given that individuals engaging in earthquake-related doomscrolling are exposed to reports of death, there exists a propensity for heightened death distress (Buchanan et al., 2021).

Similarly to self-compassion, resilience represents a protective factor for mental well-being (Luo et al., 2024; Wadi et al., 2024). Resilience denotes an individual's capacity to effectively cope with adverse life events, rebound swiftly, and adapt to novel circumstances (Doğan, 2015; Kutuk, 2023). It embodies the ability to maintain fortitude amidst life's challenges (Jackson et al., 2007). In this regard, self-compassion, akin to resilience, constitutes a step toward healing through the navigation of difficult emotions (Ericson et al., 2024; Germer, 2009). Given the close association between self-compassion and resilience, individuals demonstrating self-compassion are likely to exhibit heightened resilience levels (Shebuski et al., 2020; Voon et al., 2022). These individuals are relatively able to cope well with traumatic experiences such as earthquakes, and tsunamis (Kukihara et al., 2014; Trip et al., 2018). Hence, it is hypothesized that individuals with elevated resilience levels may manifest enhanced capacity for recovery and lower levels of death distress among those impacted by earthquakes (Gul et al., 2022; Hamza et al., 2022).

Aligned with existing literature, this study aims to elucidate the psychological processes among individuals following the February 6, 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, considering certain variables. Specifically, the study endeavors to explore the mediating roles of doomscrolling and resilience in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress, while examining the interplay among these variables. This research holds significant implications as the first to concurrently address these four variables and scrutinize their effects on individuals directly or indirectly affected by earthquakes. While there are studies demonstrating some relationships between self-compassion and death distress (Kavaklı et al., 2020; Yousefi Afrashteh and Masoumi, 2021), self-compassion and resilience (Voon et al., 2022), and resilience and death distress (Gul et al., 2022), no studies have been found examining the relationships between self-compassion and doomscrolling or death distress and doomscrolling. This study is expected to contribute to the literature by providing insights into the relatively new concept of doomscrolling, particularly in understanding individuals affected by earthquakes. Additionally, the results of this study could serve as a source for any future theories or frameworks related to the concept of doomscrolling.

Şalcıoğlu et al. (2003) emphasized the enduring psychological repercussions of traumatic events like earthquakes and advocated for long-

term mental health service provisions. Although studies examining the psychological processes of individuals affected by the earthquakes in Türkiye in 2023 are present in the literature (Cengiz and Peker, 2023, 2024; Kocyigit et al., 2024), given Türkiye's high earthquake risk and large population, there is a need for further research. Accordingly, this study's findings are crucial for understanding the mental states of not only directly affected individuals but also those indirectly impacted by earthquakes, guiding interventions, and illuminating future research directions. Building on existing literature, the hypotheses of this study are outlined as follows:

H1: Self-compassion will be negatively related to death distress.
H2: The relationship between self-compassion and death distress will be mediated by doomscrolling and resilience in a parallel multiple mediation model.

## Method

### Participants

Data were collected from a total of 364 individuals across 55 different provinces in Türkiye using the snowball sampling method. The study included only those participants who were directly or indirectly affected by the earthquake and were over the age of 18. The participant cohort comprised 296 (81.3%) females and 68 (18.7%) males. The mean age of participants was 22.14 years (SD = 3.87; range = 18–47). The majority of participants held university degrees (54.7%). Perceived socioeconomic status was predominantly middle class (80.2%). Among the participants, 52.2% reported being affected by the earthquake through media and social media ($N$ = 190), 26.4% indicated themselves or their immediate family members as earthquake survivors ($N$ = 96), while the remaining 21.4% reported having a relative who survived the earthquake outside their immediate family ($N$ = 78). Detailed participants' characteristics are presented in Table 1.

### Procedure

Before commencing data collection, the study received approval from the Ethics Committee of Yıldız Technical University (Report Number: 20230502050), and adherence to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki was ensured throughout the study. Subsequently, the scale items were transferred to a Google Forms document and shared with volunteer participants. Each volunteer received a consent form and proceeded to answer the scale items after reading and providing consent. Additionally, participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point and to discontinue answering the questions.

This online document, containing the scale items and consent form, was delivered by the authors to participants known to be affected by the earthquake via various social media channels (e.g. Whatsapp, Instagram). In line with Goodman's (1961) recommendations for snowball sampling, each participant recruited another individual known to be affected by the earthquake. The required sample size was determined using G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) by the researchers. G*Power is a free program that enables the determination of practical sample sizes. According to these calculations, a minimum sample size of 236 participants was deemed sufficient to maintain a power of 0.95 with the inclusion of three predictor variables.

### Measures

*Self-compassion scale.* Originally developed by Neff (2003b) and adapted into Turkish by Deniz et al. (2008), this scale comprises 24 items (e.g. "I try to be loving toward myself when I'm feeling emotional pain.") measuring self-compassion, with a single dimension. Participants rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = almost never, 5 = almost always). Higher scores indicate greater levels of self-

**Table 1.** Participants' characteristics.

| Variable | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| *Gender* | | |
| Female | 296 | 81.3 |
| Male | 68 | 18.7 |
| *Educational status* | | |
| Primary school | 1 | 0.3 |
| High school | 158 | 43.4 |
| University | 199 | 54.7 |
| Master/Ph.D. | 6 | 1.7 |
| *Perceived socio-economic status* | | |
| Lower | 49 | 13.5 |
| Middle | 292 | 80.2 |
| Upper | 23 | 6.3 |
| *Age* | | |
| 18–22 | 261 | 71.7 |
| 23–27 | 83 | 22.8 |
| 28–32 | 10 | 2.7 |
| 33–37 | 4 | 1.1 |
| 38–42 | 2 | 0.5 |
| 43–47 | 4 | 1.1 |
| *Experience an earthquake before* | | |
| Yes | 259 | 71.2 |
| No | 105 | 28.8 |
| *Loss of a relative due to an earthquake* | | |
| Yes | 48 | 13.2 |
| No | 316 | 86.8 |
| *How were you affected by this earthquake?* | | |
| Myself and/or my family were affected by the earthquake. | 96 | 26.4 |
| My relatives were affected by the earthquake. | 78 | 21.4 |
| I was affected by the earthquake through the media and social media channels. | 190 | 52.2 |

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics.

| Variables | Descriptive statistics and reliabilities | | | | | | | Correlations | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | SD | Skewness | Kurtosis | $\alpha$ | $\omega$ | $\lambda 6$ | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. Self-compassion | 75.05 | 15.70 | 0.02 | 0.14 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.95 | — | | |
| 2. Resilience | 18.00 | 4.68 | −0.08 | −0.11 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.85 | 0.60** | — | |
| 3. Doomscrolling | 35.17 | 18.78 | 1.09 | 0.89 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.96 | −0.28** | −0.28** | — |
| 4. Death distress | 25.97 | 6.84 | 0.20 | −0.04 | 0.83 | 0.78 | 0.88 | −0.37** | −0.42** | 0.34** |

**$p < 0.01$.

compassion. The Turkish adaptation demonstrates strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89 and a test-retest reliability of 0.83. The reliability coefficient for this study is presented in Table 2.

*Doomscrolling scale.* Developed by Sharma et al. (2022) and subsequently adapted into Turkish by Satıcı et al. (2022), this scale measures doomscrolling behavior. It consists of 15 items (e.g. "I lose track of time when I read bad news on social media") rated on a 7-point Likert scale

(1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Higher scores signify elevated levels of doomscrolling. The Turkish adaptation demonstrates high reliability, with coefficients ranging from $\alpha = 0.938$ to $\alpha = 0.944$, $\omega = 0.942$ to $\omega = 0.947$, and $\lambda 6 = 0.949$ to $\lambda 6 = 0.955$. The reliability coefficient for this study is computed and displayed in Table 2.

*The brief resilience scale.* Originally developed by Smith et al. (2008) and adapted into Turkish by Doğan (2015), this scale assesses resilience. It consists of six items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), including three reverse-scored items (e.g. "It takes a long time for me to recover from the effects of negativity in my life"). Total scores range from 6 to 30, with higher scores indicating greater resilience. The Turkish adaptation demonstrates satisfactory internal consistency, with an internal consistency coefficient of 0.83. The reliability coefficient for this study is calculated and provided in Table 2.

*Death distress scale.* Developed by Dadfar and Lester (2020) and adapted into Turkish by Yıldırım and Güler (2021), this scale measures death distress across three components: obsession, depression, and anxiety. It comprises nine items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = always). Sample items include statements such as "I am preoccupied by thoughts of death" (obsession), "I feel sad when I dream of death" (depression), and "The thought of death never bothers me" (anxiety). Higher scores indicate elevated levels of death distress. The Turkish adaptation demonstrates high internal reliability. The reliability coefficient for this study is calculated and reported in Table 2.

### Data analysis

Initially, descriptive statistics, encompassing measures such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, were computed to examine the dataset. Subsequently, correlational analysis was conducted to explore the associations among the variables: self-compassion, doomscrolling, resilience, and death distress. To investigate the mediating roles of doomscrolling and resilience, a two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was employed. In the study, gender and loss of relatives due to the earthquake were controlled as covariates due to the significant differences in these variables among the participants. The first step entailed evaluating the measurement model to ensure the observed variables adequately represented the latent constructs. Following the satisfactory validation of the measurement model, the second step involved scrutinizing the structural model. Various fit indices, including RMSEA, SRMR, RFI, NFI, IFI, CFI, GFI, and TLI, proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999), were utilized to assess the overall fit of the data. Data analysis was conducted utilizing IBM SPSS Statistics 22, AMOS 24, and JASP 0.11.1.

## Results

### Preliminary analysis

The examination of skewness (ranging from $-0.08$ to 1.09) and kurtosis (ranging from $-0.11$ to 0.89) values provided support for the normality of the distribution. These findings serve as evidence for the distribution's normality. Furthermore, all variables exhibited statistically significant correlations. The strongest correlation was observed between resilience and self-compassion ($r = 0.597$, $p < 0.01$), whereas the weakest correlations were observed between doomscrolling and both self-compassion and resilience ($r = -0.275$, $p < 0.01$). A comprehensive summary of correlation and descriptive statistics is presented in Table 2.

### Measurement model

The model comprises four latent variables: self-compassion, doomscrolling, resilience, and

death distress, each with three observed variables. The fit indices for the measurement model were as follows: $\chi^2(48, N = 364) = 133.41$, $p < 0.001$; RFI = 0.93; NFI = 0.96; IFI = 0.97; TLI = 0.96; CFI = 0.97; GFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.070; SRMR = 0.050. These indices indicate a good fit for the data. Factor loadings, ranging from 0.51 to 0.96, were all statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that all indicators effectively represented their respective variables.

### *Structural equation modeling*

Initially, a fully mediated model, referred to as Model I, was examined to evaluate the roles of doomscrolling and resilience. The results indicated that Model I demonstrated an acceptable fit to the data, with the following fit indices: $\chi^2(72, N = 364) = 207.00$, $p < 0.001$; RFI = 0.92; NFI = 0.93; IFI = 0.96; TLI = 0.94; CFI = 0.96; GFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.072; SRMR = 0.082; AIC = 273.00; ECVI = 0.752. Sub-sequently, a partially mediated model (Model II), which included two mediators and a direct path from self-compassion to death distress, was tested and found to indicate an acceptable fit. The fit indices for Model II were as follows: $\chi^2(71, N = 364) = 202.77$, $p < 0.001$; RFI = 0.92; NFI = 0.94; IFI = 0.96; TLI = 0.94; CFI = 0.96; GFI = 0.93; RMSEA = 0.072; SRMR = 0.080; AIC = 270.76; ECVI = 0.746. Both Model 1 and Model 2 demonstrated acceptable fit indices and significant factor loadings. A comparison between Model 1 and Model 2 revealed a significant chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2 = 4.24$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, Model 2 had a lower AIC and ECVI, indicating that the inclusion of the additional path significantly improved the model. Consequently, the overall results supported a partially mediating model. Figure 1 illustrates the partially mediating model.

## Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the psychological impacts of the earthquakes on individuals, particularly focusing on the events of 6 February 2023, which marked one of the most catastrophic natural disasters in Türkiye's history. While previous studies have investigated similar themes among individuals affected by earthquakes in Türkiye (Cengiz and Peker, 2023, 2024; Kocyigit et al., 2024), there remains a need for further research to encompass diverse variables and deepen our understanding of the experiences of those affected by such devastating natural occurrences. Therefore, this study delved into whether doomscrolling and resilience serve as mediators in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress. The results of the study showed that doomscrolling and resilience have a partial mediating role in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress.

The primary finding of this study was a significant negative association between self-compassion and death distress. This aligns with prior literature, indicating a negative correlation between these variables (Kavaklı et al., 2020; Milligan and Almomani, 2020; Sharifi Saki et al., 2019; Sperandio et al., 2022; Yousefi Afrashteh and Masoumi, 2021). High levels of death distress have been linked to increased mental health challenges (Menzies et al., 2019), suggesting a potential risk to the mental well-being of individuals exposed to traumatic events like major earthquakes (Kristensen et al., 2012). However, self-compassion, recognized as a protective factor for mental health, may also mitigate death distress (Liu et al., 2023). Additionally, previous studies imply that self-compassion could play a crucial role in coping with death distress-related issues. According to terror management theory, people are aware of their mortality and the inevitability of their own death. However, thoughts and feelings about death can be so intense for some individuals that they disrupt daily life (Pyszczynski et al., 2015). Especially catastrophic events, such as earthquakes that cause a significant loss of life, can exacerbate these death-related distress (Boukhary et al., 2024). This theory suggests

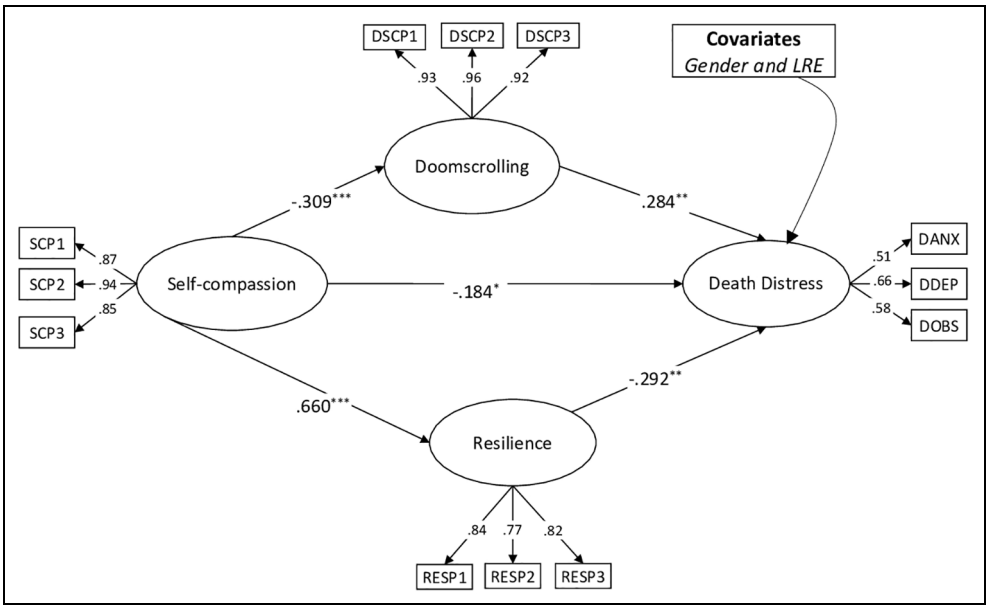


**Figure 1.** Structural equation modeling for the parallel multiple mediation model. In this model, doomscrolling and resilience partially mediate the relationship between self-compassion and death distress. RESP: parcel of resilience; SCP: parcel of self-compassion; DSCP: parcel of doomscrolling; DANX: death anxiety; DDEP: death depression; DOBS: death obsession; LRE: loss of a relative due to earthquake.
*$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. ***$p < 0.001$.

that strengthening protective factors, such as self-compassion, can reduce the intensity of death-related distress in individuals. Moreover, according to the same theory, when people become aware of death-related thoughts, they often attempt to suppress or deny these thoughts (Pyszczynski et al., 2015). In contrast, individuals who exhibit self-compassion are expected to do the opposite; they are likely to accept and validate their experiences, strive to alleviate their suffering, and consequently reduce their death-related distress (Neff, 2003a). Thus, the current finding corroborates existing literature and confirms hypothesis H1. Notably, while prior studies exploring the relationship between self-compassion and death distress have largely focused on health (Milligan and Almomani, 2020; Sharifi Saki et al., 2019; Sperandio et al., 2022) and pandemic contexts (Kavaklı et al., 2020; Yousefi Afrashteh and Masoumi, 2021), this study presents a novel framework by investigating individuals affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes.

Another key finding was the mediating role of doomscrolling in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress. While prior research has explored the link between self-compassion and death distress, encompassing death obsession, depression, and anxiety (Kavaklı et al., 2020; Milligan and Almomani, 2020; Sharifi Saki et al., 2019; Sperandio et al., 2022; Yousefi Afrashteh and Masoumi, 2021), none have examined the potential mediating role of doomscrolling in this relationship. Given the relative novelty of doomscrolling in the literature (Sharma et al., 2022), there is a dearth of research investigating the interplay between doomscrolling, self-compassion, and death distress. Similar to our study, Kartol et al. (2023) observed doomscrolling behaviors

among individuals affected by earthquakes in Türkiye. Furthermore, Anand et al. (2022) noted increased internet usage during the pandemic. Drawing from existing literature, individuals lacking self-compassion may persist in consuming negative earthquake-related news via social media, exacerbating their anxiety, depression, and death-related obsessions. Conversely, individuals demonstrating self-compassion may mitigate death distress by avoiding adverse news, as suggested by prior studies (Buchanan et al., 2021; Mannell and Meese, 2022; Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2021).

Additionally, resilience was found to mediate the relationship between self-compassion and death distress. While no prior studies have explored the mediating role of resilience in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress, research has investigated the associations between self-compassion and resilience (Kotera et al., 2021; Lefebvre et al., 2020) and resilience and death distress (Farahbakhsh Beh et al., 2019; Mohammadi et al., 2022; Paul and Shilpa, 2021; Zanatta et al., 2020). Lefebvre et al. (2020) highlighted the potential for self-compassion to enhance resilience, given its role in coping with adversity. Zanatta et al. (2020) reviewed six scientific articles on resilience, suggesting its protective effect against stressful conditions, including those related to death. Combining these insights with our findings, self-compassion may enhance individuals' resilience, thereby bolstering their mental well-being (Lefebvre et al., 2020), and individuals with heightened resilience may experience reduced death-related distress (Zanatta et al., 2020). Conversely, individuals lacking self-compassion may struggle to cope with adversity, leading to diminished resilience and heightened death distress. Furthermore, a conservation of resources theory predicts that the stronger an individual's personal resources, such as self-compassion, are during challenging and traumatic experiences, the higher their likelihood of rapid recovery and resilience (Deniz and Satıcı, 2017; Hobfoll, 2012). It is also expected that more resilient individuals will experience reduced death-related distress, which is typically intensified by negative experiences.

The findings regarding the mediating roles of both doomscrolling and resilience indicate that these variables exhibit parallel multiple mediation between self-compassion and death distress, supporting the H2 hypothesis. Based on cross-sectional data, significant relationships were observed among all variables, and the mediating roles of doomscrolling and resilience in the relationship between self-compassion and death distress among earthquake-affected individuals were established. In essence, while self-compassion may positively influence resilience and negatively affect doomscrolling, the latter may exacerbate death distress. Notably, no prior studies have concurrently investigated these four variables. Consequently, individuals with high levels of self-compassion and resilience and low levels of doomscrolling may experience less severe death distress.

Despite the valuable insights garnered from this study, several limitations warrant acknowledgment. Firstly, relying solely on self-report measures may compromise the internal validity of the data. Moreover, the fact that participants were reached in only 55 out of 81 provinces in Türkiye, with varying degrees of impact from the earthquake, may potentially limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Furthermore, this limitation may be influenced by the predominance of young adults and women in the sample. Additionally, the cross-sectional design precludes establishing causal relationships between variables. Future research could address these limitations by employing larger samples, including participants directly affected by the earthquake, conducting longitudinal studies, and exploring various interrelationships between variables to yield more comprehensive insights.

Despite these limitations, this study contributes to our understanding of the psychological experiences of earthquake-affected individuals,

elucidating the roles of doomscrolling and resilience as mediators between self-compassion and death distress. These findings offer valuable implications for researchers and mental health professionals, fostering a deeper understanding of how to support individuals affected by major natural disasters such as earthquakes, pandemics, and tsunamis. Furthermore, future research could adopt experimental designs to elucidate the causal links between self-compassion, death distress, doomscrolling, and resilience. Counseling or psychotherapy interventions focusing on enhancing self-compassion, reducing doomscrolling behaviors, and fostering resilience may alleviate individuals' death distress. Lastly, the current findings underscore the importance of interventions targeting not only directly affected individuals but also those indirectly impacted by earthquakes.

## Data sharing statement

Data will be available on request.

## Declaration of conflicting interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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## Ethics approval

The study protocol has been approved by Yıldız Technical University Scientific Research and Ethical Review Board (Report Number: 20230502050). The study was performed in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its following updates.

## Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all the individual participants that were included in the study.

## ORCID iD

Yağmur Kaya https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4077-3182

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