

## **An Analysis of Psychological Resilience and Goal Commitment Levels of Students of the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In this study, it is aimed to analyze psychological resilience and goal commitment levels of the students that are studying in sports sciences and education faculties. The study group consists of 304 (159 males, 145 females) students from Uşak University Faculty of Sport Sciences and Education, included in the study per the convenience sampling method from the non-probabilistic sampling. We employed the relational screening method in this study, which is designed per the quantitative research model. As a data collection tool in the research, The "Psychological Resilience Scale" developed by Liebenberg et al. [1], adapted to Turkish by Arslan [2] and of which validity-reliability study was conducted, the "Goal Commitment Scale" developed by Klein et al. [3] and rearranged by Hollenbeck et al. [4] and adapted into Turkish by Şenel and Yıldız [5] was employed. In the analysis of data; frequency, percentage, t-test, One-Way ANOVA, and Post Hoc (LSD) test statistics test were utilized. Per the research findings, no significant difference was found between the students' goal commitment and psychological resilience levels with the variables of gender, family income level, and father's educational status. However, a significant difference was identified between the students' psychological resilience levels and the faculties they studied, whether they received psychological support or not, and the mother's education level. We observe that the students' psychological resilience levels studying at the faculty of sports sciences and doing sports a lifestyle are higher than the students studying at the faculties of education. As a result, we analyze that the students' psychological resilience levels were high, and their goal commitment levels were medium. In this context, we observe that students who do regular sports are more psychologically resistant to their difficulties and are more resistant to stress.

### **1. Introduction**

In today's world, psychological resilience is one of the frequently emphasized concepts. The concept that has gained such importance is the risky situations experienced at the global level and in our society, great crises, and the effects of these risky situations and crises on individuals. Psychological resilience is a concept related to individuals' ability to remain strong in challenging situations and crisis periods in their lives and to adapt quickly to the new situation [6]. Besides the joy of being admitted to the university, students who get an opportunity to study at the university;

experience many problems such as separation from the family, making new friends, fear of being alone, economic difficulties, getting used to the dormitory life, anxiety about their future profession and business life. Students are exposed to stress and strain from various sources to overcome such problems [7, 8]. If students do not have sufficient equipment to protect themselves against such stress and strain, they may feel weak and face psychological and physical disorders [9]. The concept of psychological resilience aims to rely on these stress factors that individuals experience and to reveal the nature of their reactions to problems [10]. These social life reactions can be positive or adverse [11]. Students who experience emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decline in success should be provided with information, psychological, and social support [12]. We observe that social support can affect psychological resilience when it comes to stressful living conditions [13]. Some researchers note that students are motivated to improve their commitment to the goals they set for their academic achievements via the strategies they implement (such as study groups, daily study programs, repeating the educational content, and taking important notes) [14]. Therefore, it is not sufficient for students to set a goal and display their commitment to such goals students to achieve. As the more robust and more committed students are in their struggle to achieve their goals, the more they can adapt to the challenges and changes they experience. Besides, students that are less committed to their goals may abandon their goals more easily if they face substantial problems [15]. In this perspective, goal setting theory [16], which is among the most valid and useful theories in the literature, requires a commitment to the goal [17]. There is a relationship between goal setting and performance [18], and goal commitment plays the most critical role in comprehending the relationship between performance and goal [19]. In general, goal commitment is a persistent, commitment, and determined behavior by exhibiting high performance to achieve a particular goal [5]. In this perspective, goal commitment can be defined as the individual's commitment to achieving his goals [20]. Considering such definitions, we observe that psychological resilience cannot be gathered under a single definition due to its different dimensions, yet there are common points in all of them [21]. In such definitions, psychological resilience is explained by characteristics such as adapting to stressful situations, not being sick despite negativities, coping with stress and difficulties, and recovery and healing following stressful experiences [22, 23]. The concept of psychological resilience is derived from the Latin word "resiliens" and refers to a substance having elasticity and can easily return to its former state [24]. Two critical situations arise per the concept of psychological resilience; the first is to experience a vital threat to the individual, and the second is to survive and adapt despite such threat and difficulty [25]. Thanks to the personality characteristics in individuals, psychological resilience is a factor that reduces the adverse effects of stress as well as the tension that may arise from stress [26]. While high-level social skills, problem-solving skills, and self-efficacy are some of the individual characteristics that contribute to psychological resilience, positive family and peer relationships are among the environmental traits which support psychological resilience [27]. Literature analysis demonstrates that psychological resilience [2, 10, 28-34] and goal commitment [5, 35-41] related studies have been observed. However, we see very few studies that address psychological resilience and goal commitment [37, 42].

In this perspective, the research was conducted to identify the students' psychological resilience and goal commitment levels studying in sports sciences and education faculties. This study considers that psychological resilience and goal commitment will contribute to the limited literature on the subject. Adopting sports as a lifestyle required for individuals to improve their psychological resilience and goal commitment will shed light on studies to improve their psychological health. The following questions will be answered according to this goal:

- H1. Is there a significant difference between the students' psychological resilience and goal commitment levels by the gender variable?
- H2. Is there a statistically significant difference in psychological resilience and goal commitment levels by students' faculty variable?
- H3. Is there a statistically significant difference in psychological resilience and goal commitment levels by

the variable of whether the students do sports or not?

H4. Is there a statistically significant difference in psychological resilience and goal commitment levels by students' parents' income and educational status?

H5. Is there a statistically significant difference in psychological resilience and goal commitment levels by whether students receive psychological support?

## 2. Method

The model of the research, study group, data collection tool, and analysis employed by the research has been provided concerning the research method in this section.

### 2.1. Research Model

The research utilizes a relational scanning design, one of the quantitative models. The relational screening model aims to identify the presence and/or degree of mutual exchange between two or more variables [43].

### 2.2. Study Group

Study participants were 304 university students, 159 (52.3%) women and 145 (47.7%) men studying in the second and third grades of Uşak University, Faculty of Sport Sciences and Education in the fall semester 2019-2020 academic year. Of the students selected by convenience sampling method, one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods, 124 students stated that they study in sports sciences and 180 in education faculty.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools

This study employs "Personal Information Form," "Psychological Resilience Scale," and "Goal Commitment Scale."

**Personal Information Form:** The researchers created it to obtain demographic information from participants such as gender, faculty, sports or not, their parents' income and education, and whether students receive psychological support.

**Psychological Resilience Scale:** The scale developed by Liebenberg et al. [44] from a socio-ecological perspective includes 28 items. The short form study of the scale was conducted by Liebenberg et al. [1], and a 12-item form was developed. Arslan [2] adapted the scale into Turkish. It has a five-point Likert structure and is rated between "fully identifying me (5)" and "never identifying (1)". The internal consistency coefficient of the Turkish form of the scale is  $\alpha = .91$ . Per the research, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale is  $\alpha = .74$ .

**Goal Commitment Scale:** It is developed by Hollenbeck et al. [4] in 9 items, and rearranged in 5 items by Klein et al. [3], is adapted to Turkish by and validity-reliability studies are conducted by Şenel and Yıldız [5]. It is a 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of five questions with the answers "(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) indecisive, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree". Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be  $\alpha = .74$ . For the research sample, the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient is  $\alpha = .71$ .

### 2.4. Data Collection

The data were collected via a questionnaire by the students' voluntary participation at the Uşak University Faculty of Sport Sciences and Education. In this perspective, the volunteer participants were informed about the questionnaires, and their answers would only be used for scientific research.

### 2.5. Data Analysis

SPSS 22 statistical package program was employed to assess the participant data. Per the normality test, parametric



tests were applied to regularly distribution data. Accordingly, data analysis utilizes t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Post Hoc test statistics (LSD) in independent groups. The study takes the error level as 0.05.

#### 4. Results

This section includes the research findings. Findings are described in detail with tables and descriptive information under the table.

**Table 1.** Psychological Resilience Scale and Goal Commitment Scale levels of the participants

Scales	$\bar{x}$	ss
Goal Commitment Scale	14.69	2.96
Psychological Resilience Scale	48.73	6.31

As observed in Table 1, analysis of the students' average values from the scale shows that the students' goal commitment levels are at a medium level and ( $\bar{x}=14.69$ ) psychological resilience levels ( $\bar{x}=48.73$ ) are high.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics regarding participants

Independent Variables	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	159	52,3
	Male	145	47.7
Faculties	Sports sciences	124	40.8
	Faculty of education	180	59.2
Doing exercise	Yes	187	61.5
	No	117	38.5
Family income level	2020-3020	142	46.7
	3020-4020	93	30.6
	Over 4020	69	22.7
Mother's educational status	Elementary school	168	55.3
	Middle school	60	19,7
	High school	53	17.4
	University	23	7.6
Father's educational status	Elementary school	90	29.6
	Middle school	82	27
	High school	87	28.6
	University	45	14.8
Receiving psychological support	Yes	42	13.8
Not receiving psychological support	No	262	86.2

n = 304

Table 2 illustrates that 52.3% of the participants are women, 59.2% are students studying at the education faculty, 61.5% are students doing sports, 46.7% have their families with an income between 2020-3020 TL, 55.3% of whose mothers have elementary education, 29.6% of whose father are primary school graduates, and 86.2% were students who did not receive psychological support.

**Table 3.** Analysis of differences of students' goal commitment and psychological resilience levels by independent variables

Independent Variables	Scales	Groups				Levene Test			
			n	$\bar{x}$	ss	F	p	t	p
Gender	Goal Commitment	Female	159	14,45	3,21	1,987	0,160	-1,488	0,138
		Male	145	14,95	2,66				
	Psychological Resilience	Female	159	48,23	6,16	0,003	0,959	-1,433	0,153
		Male	145	49,27	6,44				
Faculty Variable	Goal Commitment	Sport Science	124	14,48	2,45	8,516	0,004	-1,089	0,277
		Faculty of Education	180	14,83	3,27				
	Psychological Resilience	Sport Science	124	49,95	5,96	0,978	0,324	2,843	<b>0,005*</b>
		Faculty of Education	180	47,88	6,41				
Doing Sports or Not Variable	Goal Commitment	Yes	187	14,71	2,64	7,952	0,005	0,129	0,898
		No	117	14,66	3,43				
	Psychological Resilience	Yes	187	49,47	6,41	0,557	0,456	2,624	<b>0,009*</b>
		No	117	47,54	5,98				
Did You Get Psychological Support	Goal Commitment	Yes	42	14,33	3,07	0,002	0,964	-0,834	0,405
		No	262	14,74	2,95				
	Psychological Resilience	No	42	46,31	5,94	0,166	0,684	-2,704	<b>0,007*</b>
		Yes	262	49,11	6,29				

\*P&lt;0,05

Table 3 illustrates that no statistically significant difference was found between the students' goal commitment and psychological resilience levels concerning the faculty variable of their gender and goal commitment levels ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, a statistically significant difference was found between psychological resilience levels and faculty variable ( $t(302) = 2.843$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It demonstrates that the psychological resilience levels of the students studying at the sports science faculty ( $\bar{x} = 49.95$ ) are higher than those studying at the faculty of education ( $\bar{x} = 47.88$ ). While there was no statistically significant difference between the students' doing sports or not and their goal commitment levels ( $p = 0.898$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), a statistically significant difference was found between the psychological resilience levels and the variable of doing sports or not ( $t(302) = 2.624$ ;  $p = 0.009$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It demonstrates that the psychological resilience levels of the students doing sports ( $\bar{x} = 47.49$ ) are higher than those who do not do sports ( $\bar{x} = 47.54$ ). While no statistically significant difference was determined between the students' psychological support variable and their goal commitment ( $p = 0.405$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), a statistically significant difference was found between the psychological resilience levels and the variable of receiving psychological support ( $t(302) = -2.704$ ;  $p = 0.007$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The analysis results observe that the psychological resilience levels of students who do not receive psychological support ( $\bar{x} = 49.11$ ) are higher than those receiving psychological support ( $\bar{x} = 46.31$ ).

**Table 4.** Analysis of Differences of Students' Goal Commitment and Psychological Resilience Levels by Independent Variables

Independent variables	Scales	Groups	n	$\bar{x}$	ss	df	F	p	Difference LSD
Family income level	Goal Commitment	2020-3020	142	14.71	3.08	2 301	0.079	0.924	
		3020-4020	93	14.59	3.19				
		4020	69	14.77	2.38				
	Psychological Resilience	2020-3020	142	48.70	6.56		0.391	0,677	
		3020-4020	93	48.38	6.18				
		4020	69	49.26	5.99				
Mother education level	Goal Commitment	Elementary school	168	14.38	2.86	3 300	3.564	<b>0.015*</b>	<b>1-3 2-3</b>
		Middle school	60	14,40	3.25				
		High school	53	15.79	2.94				
		University	23	15.17	2.41				
	Psychological Resilience	Elementary school	168	48.68	6.52		0.030	0,993	
		Middle school	60	48.63	5.83				
		High school	53	48.94	6.71				
		University	23	48.83	5.28				
Father education level	Goal Commitment	Elementary school	90	14.66	3.10	3 300	1.734	0.160	
		Middle school	82	14.56	3.10				
		High school	87	14.38	2.47				
		University	45	15.58	3.22				
	Psychological Resilience	Elementary school	90	47.96	6.80		0.824	0.481	
		Middle school	82	48.84	6.16				
		High school	87	49.44	5.87				
		University	45	48.69	6.41				

\* p < 0.05; 1 = Primary school; 2 = Secondary school; 3 = High school; 4 = University

Table 4 illustrates that a statistically significant difference was found between the students' goal commitment and psychological resilience levels and the income level of the family ( $p = 0.924$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ;  $p = 0.677$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).>> A statistically significant difference was found between the goal commitment levels of the students and the education level of the mother ( $F(3-300) = 3.564$ ;  $p = 0.015$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It demonstrates that the goal commitment levels of students whose mothers are high school graduates ( $\bar{x} = 15.79$ ) than those whose mothers are primary school graduates ( $\bar{x} = 14.38$ ) and secondary school ( $\bar{x} = 14.40$ ). There was no statistically significant difference between psychological resilience and mother education level ( $p = 0.993$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).> No statistically significant difference was found between the goal commitment and psychological resilience levels of the students per the educational status of the father ( $p = 0.160$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ;  $p = 0.481$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Aiming to analyze students' psychological resilience and goal commitment levels studying in sports sciences and faculties of education, this study demonstrates that no significant difference was found between the students' goal commitment and psychological resilience levels and their gender. The literature review demonstrates that there are studies that comply with the research results for the gender variable [26, 42, 45-51]. However, unlike the research results, some literature studies show that detect a significant difference between gender [52, 53]. Fountain [54] also observes that men



have higher levels of psychological resilience than women. Liu and Li [55] found a significant relationship between the leaders' goal commitment levels and their gender in their study. We consider that different research results arise from different sampling groups.

We observe that the psychological resilience levels of individuals studying at the faculty of sports sciences were higher than those studying at education faculties. We can say that students studying at the faculty of sports sciences do sports regularly and adopting sports a lifestyle; they are more resistant to the difficulties they face. However, there was no significant difference between goal commitment and the faculty variable. We observe similar research in the literature review in some aspects [48, 56-57]. Accordingly, we can note that individuals who do sports have higher psychological resilience than those who do not.

Analyzing psychological resilience per whether students do sports or not variable; we observe that the psychological resilience levels of students who do sports regularly are higher than those who do not do sports. Analysis of the research found that individuals who do sports regularly have the effect of reducing their stress levels, and they are psychologically more resilient and stronger than those who do not do sports [58-60]. Some research demonstrates similar results that individuals doing sports had a positive effect on their sportive success and psychological resilience [61-62]. However, unlike our findings, some studies in the literature do not show a significant difference between the psychological resilience levels of individuals and their sports experience [63-65]. No significant difference was found between the students' goal commitment levels and the variable of doing sports or not. However, unlike our study, in their study on students studying in the faculty of sports sciences, Bingöl and Bingöl [66] found that some studies suggest that the students' goal commitment levels may improve by encouraging active sports. A similar study identified that goal commitment was significant and effective on individuals' increasing levels of physical activity [18].

Our study also finds that the psychological resilience levels of the students who did not receive psychological support were higher than the students who received psychological help. Similar to our study, in their study, Souri and Hasanirad [67] found a significant relationship between resilience and psychological well-being. Burton et al. [68] showed that interventions, improving resilience, positively affect psychological well-being, positive emotions, and well-being in individuals. However, we found no significant difference between students' goal commitment and whether they received psychological support. Analysis of the related-study results observes that the most important sources of support for students are their families and that the psychological resilience levels of university students are good [69].

No significant difference was found between their families' income level and the students' goal commitment and psychological resilience. In the study conducted by McCrae and Costa [70], no significant difference was found between the earned income and psychological resilience. Such research result supports our findings. Bhana and Bachoo [71] concluded that the level of psychological resilience changes with the income level, and the income level predicts the psychological resilience level. We consider that such a difference arises from the use of the qualitative method as a research design. A significant difference was found between the mother's education level and the students' goal commitment levels. Per this finding, we observe that the goal commitment levels of the students whose mothers were high school graduates were higher than those whose mothers were primary and secondary school graduates. As the mother's education level increases, the students' level of goal commitment increases. No significant difference was found between the students' psychological resilience levels and the mother's education level. No significant difference was found between the fathers' educational status and goal commitment and the students' psychological resilience levels. Literature does not demonstrate any similar or different studies with our research.

Our study, in which the psychological resilience and goal commitment levels of students studying in sports sciences and faculties of education were analyzed, observe that the students who participated in our study generally had a moderate level of goal commitment and that they had a high level of psychological resilience towards the difficulties they face in

their lives. We observed that the psychological resilience levels of the students who study at the faculty of sports sciences and make sports a lifestyle are higher. In this context, we observe that students who do regular sports are more psychologically resistant to their difficulties and are more resistant to stress. Besides, we found that the psychological resilience levels of the athletes who did not receive psychological help were higher than those who received psychological help. Possible outcomes of the study demonstrate that the active participation of students studying in sports sciences faculties and their adoption of sports as a lifestyle will have positive results on their psychological health and goal commitment; therefore, we observe that sports activities may help to spread among the students studying in education faculties.

We have compared the sports sciences and education faculties in our study. Comparing faculties and sports branches in future studies may help identify sports branches' psychological resilience and goal commitment levels.

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