

THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Abstract: The aim of the study is to determine the role of psychological factors in shaping students' academic success and to assess their level of influence based on empirical indicators. The study was based on a quantitative approach, and data were collected through a survey prepared on a five-point Likert scale. The survey assessed academic self-confidence, motivation, self-management and planning, stress and emotional tension, emotional stability, as well as socio-psychological support. Descriptive statistics, averages and percentage comparisons were used in the analysis of the data. According to the results, social and psychological support (M=4.24), motivation (M=4.23) and academic self-confidence (M=4.00) were identified as the main psychological resources that enhance students' academic performance. The obtained indicator for stress and emotional tension (M=3.68) showed that academic pressure can negatively affect students' attention, emotional well-being and activity continuity. The results on self-management and planning (M=3.49), emotional stability (M=3.37) and reverse-directional items (M=3.07) revealed the existence of development needs in the areas of time management, recovery of motivation after failure and emotional regulation. The study substantiates that academic success is a multi-component process formed not only by cognitive abilities and knowledge level, but also by interconnected psychological and social mechanisms. The obtained results necessitate the strengthening of psychological counseling services in universities, the implementation of stress management programs and the application of targeted interventions that develop students' motivation, self-regulation and academic self-confidence skills.

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Introduction

One of the main issues facing the education system in the modern era is to identify and investigate in more depth the factors that affect students' academic success. For many years, it was thought that academic achievement was mainly related to intellectual abilities and knowledge level. However, over time, research has shown that achieving high results is not limited to knowledge and intelligence alone. The different results observed among students studying under the same educational conditions, with the same teachers, and based on the same program indicate that there are other factors that affect academic success (Richardson et al., 2012).

University life is not only a stage of acquiring new knowledge for students, but also a period of personal development, social adaptation and adaptation to new living conditions. At this stage, students face various psychological and social changes. Adapting to a new team, increasing educational burden, expectations for the future and a sense of responsibility can affect their emotional state. All this is directly or indirectly reflected in the academic performance of students.

Observations show that some students, when faced with difficulties, try to work harder and find solutions to problems. Others, on the other hand, may lose motivation or withdraw from the learning process in the same situation. The psychological characteristics of the student play an important role in the emergence of these differences. In particular, self-confidence, motivation, emotional stability, and self-management skills are among the main factors affecting a student's academic performance (Bandura et al., 1996; Ramiz and Vakil, 2020). Students who believe in their abilities are usually more proactive, put more effort into achieving their goals, and accept failures as part of the development process.

Motivation also plays an important role in a student's academic success. Interest in the



educational process and internal enthusiasm make a student's learning activity more productive. Studies show that students with internal motivation demonstrate higher academic results and are more persistent in the learning process (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Jabbarov, 2017; Jabbarov et al., 2020). On the other hand, factors such as emotional state, stress, and academic anxiety can negatively affect a student's results (Pekrun et al., 2002).

In this regard, the study of the role of psychological factors in student academic success is one of the topical issues from both theoretical and practical points of view. Studying the topic can provide a better understanding of the psychological factors affecting students' academic performance, determine their development directions, and implement more effective approaches in the educational environment. The main purpose of the article is to analyze the role of psychological factors in the formation of students' academic success and to investigate the impact of these factors on academic results based on existing scientific research.

LITERATURE SUMMARY

The study of psychological factors that influence academic success is a major area of research in educational psychology. Research in this area shows that students' academic performance is not limited to cognitive abilities alone and is shaped by the interaction of various psychological factors.

Richardson, Abraham, and Bond (2012) systematically analyzed psychological factors that influence academic performance in university students. The authors compared multiple studies and found that variables such as academic self-esteem, motivation, learning strategies, and students' attitudes toward teaching had a significant impact on outcomes. One interesting finding of the study was that some psychological factors may have a stronger impact than traditional intelligence measures (Richardson et al., 2012).

Robbins and co-authors (2004) examined the psychosocial and academic skills that influence college student outcomes. They found that students' social adjustment, motivation, academic goals,



and study habits play important roles in shaping success. The study highlighted that not only the student's knowledge but also his or her psychological state is important (Robbins et al., 2004).

The relationship between personality traits and academic achievement was investigated by Poropat (2009). As a result of a meta-analysis based on the five-factor personality model, the author found that students with high levels of responsibility in particular show better academic results. The author noted that planning and a sense of responsibility have a significant impact on success (Poropat, 2009).

Credé and Kuncel (2008) examined the role of study habits and skills in shaping academic success. According to their results, proper time management, use of study strategies, and attitude towards teaching are among the main factors that increase students' academic achievement (Credé & Kuncel, 2008).

Honicke and Broadbent (2016) examined the impact of academic self-esteem on student outcomes. The authors found that students with high self-esteem were more likely to be proactive, put in more effort, and ultimately achieve higher academic results. The study found that self-esteem played a mediating role between motivation and academic performance (Honicke & Broadbent, 2016).

Mega, Ronconi, and De Beni (2014) focused on emotions, motivation, and self-regulation skills when examining the model of good students. They concluded that positive emotional states and the ability to plan one's own activities increase students' academic performance (Mega et al., 2014).

Camacho-Morles et al. (2021) conducted an extensive meta-analysis on academic emotions. The study found that while positive emotions such as curiosity, joy, and satisfaction positively influence academic performance, emotions such as fear and anxiety can impair outcomes (Camacho-Morles et al., 2021).

Credé, Tynan, and Harms (2017) examined the concept of “grit,” the trait of commitment and persistence toward long-term goals. The authors found that grit has some impact on academic success, but it is more potent when combined with other psychological factors (Credé et al., 2017).

Duckworth and Seligman (2005) examined the impact of self-control and discipline on



academic outcomes and came to an interesting conclusion: the ability to maintain self-control is, in some cases, a stronger predictor than IQ (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005).

Duckworth and co-authors (2007) examined the characteristics of commitment to long-term goals and perseverance and found that these characteristics were positively related to academic achievement (Duckworth et al., 2007).

Pintrich and De Groot (1990) investigated the components of motivation and self-regulated learning. In their study, the authors focused on students' attitudes towards the learning process, goals, and ability to control their own activities. The results showed that students with a high level of motivation and the ability to plan their own learning activities are more successful academically. The authors particularly emphasized the importance of self-regulation skills for long-term academic outcomes (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

Zimmerman (2002) has provided a general overview of the self-regulated learning model and examined the role of this skill in student performance. The author noted that skills such as goal setting, monitoring the learning process, monitoring performance, and evaluating results affect students' academic success. The study concluded that students who are able to monitor their own performance demonstrate higher academic performance (Zimmerman, 2002).

Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, and Perry (2002) examined the impact of academic emotions on learning and achievement. The authors showed that the emotions students experience have a direct impact on their learning performance. While positive emotions increase motivation and engagement, emotions such as anxiety and fear can negatively affect performance. Research has shown that emotional states play an important role in shaping academic success (Pekrun et al., 2002).

In their subsequent research, Pekrun et al. (2011) worked on measuring the emotions experienced by students during academic activities. For this purpose, the authors developed a measurement tool called the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire. The results of the study showed that the study of emotional states is important in terms of predicting academic behavior (Pekrun et al., 2011).



Komaraju and Nadler (2013) examined the relationship between academic self-efficacy, goals, and performance control skills on academic success. The authors found that students who believed in their abilities set higher goals and exerted more effort. The study also noted an indirect effect of self-efficacy on academic outcomes (Komaraju & Nadler, 2013).

Krumrei-Mancuso et al. (2013) examined psychosocial factors that influence the success of first-year students. The authors found that social support, motivation, and the level of adaptation to the university environment influenced academic outcomes. The importance of psychological adaptation was particularly emphasized during the first year of study (Krumrei-Mancuso et al., 2013).

Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (1996) examined the multifaceted impact of self-esteem on academic performance. Their results showed that students who believe in their abilities are more motivated and more resilient in the face of adversity. The authors considered self-esteem to be one of the key psychological factors of academic success (Bandura et al., 1996).

Pajares (1996) examined the role of self-esteem in academic settings from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The author demonstrated that the beliefs students form about their abilities directly influence their behavior and learning outcomes (Pajares, 1996).

Valentine, DuBois, and Cooper (2004) examined the relationship between students' self-concept and academic performance. The results of the study showed that students with positive self-concepts were more engaged in the learning process and performed better (Valentine et al., 2004).

Schunk (1991) investigated the relationship between motivation and self-esteem. The author noted that self-esteem is one of the main factors that increase student motivation and this factor also affects academic performance (Schunk, 1991).

Chemers, Hu, and Garcia (2001) studied the relationship between academic self-esteem and university adjustment. The study found that students with higher levels of self-esteem adapted to university life more quickly and achieved higher academic results (Chemers et al., 2001).

Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck (2007) examined the impact of cognitive models on academic outcomes. The authors found that students with a growth mindset responded more positively



to challenges and achieved more successful outcomes (Blackwell et al., 2007).

Diseth (2011) examined the impact of goal orientation, self-efficacy, and learning strategies on academic success. The study showed that these factors interact with each other to influence student outcomes (Diseth, 2011).

Ryan and Deci (2000) explored intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors by proposing self-determination theory. They showed that intrinsic motivation helps students develop a more sustainable attitude towards learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Ryan and Deci (2020) revisited the issue of motivation in their subsequent research and emphasized that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in the long-term maintenance of academic achievement (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Muenks and co-authors (2017) examined the trait of perseverance in comparison to personality factors. The authors found that while perseverance influences academic outcomes, it appears to be more effective when combined with other personality traits (Muenks et al., 2017).

Talsma et al. (2018) evaluated the relationship between self-esteem and academic success based on a meta-analysis. The study showed that self-esteem is one of the important predictors of academic success (Talsma et al., 2018).

van der Zanden and co-authors (2018) systematically examined the determinants of academic success among first-year students. The authors highlighted that psychological, social, and behavioral factors play an important role in students' adjustment to university and academic outcomes (van der Zanden et al., 2018).

Methodology

The main objective of this study was to determine the role of psychological factors in the formation of students' academic success, to assess the level of impact of these factors on academic performance, and to analyze the relationships between them. The study preferred a quantitative



research approach and used a survey method to collect data. The choice of the survey method is due to the fact that it allows for a systematic study of subjective assessments of students' individual psychological characteristics, attitudes towards educational activities, and academic behavior. This method was considered appropriate for the research objectives, as it allows for a more comprehensive assessment of the respondents' thinking and behavioral characteristics, motivation level, emotional state, and self-confidence indicators.

The questionnaire used in the study was developed by the author in accordance with the topic and was based on theoretical foundations. During the development of the questionnaire, the theory of academic self-esteem (Bandura et al., 1996), the theory of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000), the self-regulated learning model (Zimmerman, 2002), as well as the results of modern empirical studies explaining the academic success of students were taken into account. In the process of developing the questionnaire items, the main psychological indicators identified in the studies of Richardson et al. (2012), Robbins et al. (2004), Honicke and Broadbent (2016), Mega et al. (2014) and other authors were used.

The questionnaire was structured in two parts. The first part was designed to determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. This part included information on the gender, age, education level, course and specialty of the participants. The purpose of collecting demographic data was to make comparisons across different groups and to interpret the results more objectively.

The second part of the survey focused on measuring psychological factors that affect students' academic success and was grouped into several subscales. The academic self-esteem section (questions 1-4) was designed to assess respondents' attitude towards their own academic potential, confidence in achieving set goals, and ability to overcome difficulties. The motivation section (questions 5-8) was designed to measure students' intrinsic interest, purposefulness, and attitude towards educational activities. The self-management and planning section (questions 9-12) was included to assess time management, task organization, planning, and attention management.

The survey also took into account factors affecting the emotional state of students. The



Stress and Emotional State section (questions 13-16) was designed to determine the impact of exam anxiety, emotional stability, psychological tension and stress on academic performance. The Social and Psychological Support section (questions 17-21) aimed to assess the impact of support received from family, friends and the university environment on academic performance.

The questionnaire also included two reverse-biased items (questions 22-23) to increase the reliability and internal consistency of the responses. The addition of these items prevented respondents from marking their answers in the same direction without thinking and also increased the reliability of the measurement instrument. The personal opinions and individual approaches of the respondents were explored through an open-ended question placed at the end of the questionnaire.

In total, the questionnaire consisted of 24 questions. Of these, 5 questions covered demographic information, 18 questions were Likert-type closed-ended evaluation items, 2 questions were reverse-oriented evaluation items, and 1 question was prepared as an open-ended opinion question.

In the main part of the survey, a five-point Likert scale was used to assess the attitudes of respondents. The rating system was applied in the following form: 1 - Strongly disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Undecided, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly agree. The choice of this scale allowed us to determine the intensity level of the attitudes and positions of the respondents and to analyze the results more reliably from a statistical point of view.

It is planned to use descriptive statistical methods during the processing and analysis of the collected data. In the process of data analysis, frequency indicators, percentage distribution, average values and standard deviation indicators will be calculated. In addition, it is planned to conduct a correlation analysis to determine the relationship between students' academic success and psychological factors. This analysis will allow to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between various variables.



Results

A questionnaire was used to identify psychological factors that affect students' academic success. A total of 120 respondents participated in the survey.

Table 1. Demographics of respondents

Indicator	Category	Number	Interest
Gender	Male	44	36.7%
	Woman	76	63.3%
Age	17-19	32	26.7%
	20-22	58	48.3%
	23-25	21	17.5%
	Over 25	9	7.5%
Education level	Bachelor's degree	94	78.3%
	Master	23	19.2%
	Doctorate	3	2.5%
Course	First year	25	20.8%
	2nd year	31	25.8%
	Third year	34	28.3%
	4th year	22	18.3%
	5th year and above	8	6.8%

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

As can be seen from Table 1, the majority of respondents were female students. Based on age indicators, the majority of participants were between 20-22 years old. This indicates that the survey mainly covered an active group of students studying at the undergraduate level.

Table 2. Average indicators for psychological factors

Psychological factor	Number of items	Average indicator	Standard deviation	Evaluation
Academic self-confidence	4	4.00	0.71	High
Motivation	4	4.23	0.64	High
Self-management and planning	4	3.49	0.82	Medium-high
Stress and emotional tension	3	3.68	0.88	Medium-high
Emotional stability	1	3.37	0.91	Medium



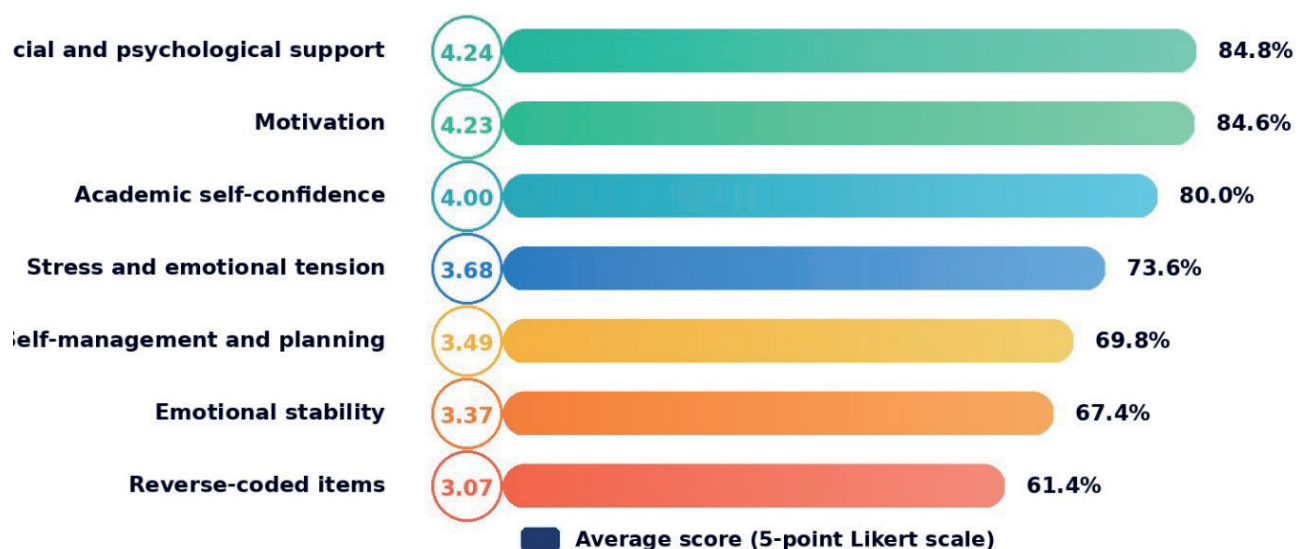
Social and psychological support	5	4.24	0.66	High
Opposite words	2	3.07	0.84	Medium

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

The results show that the highest indicator among students was recorded for the social and psychological support factor. The average indicator for this factor was 4.24. This result indicates that the support received from family, friends and the university environment plays an important role in the academic performance of students. The high motivation indicator also indicates that the students' intrinsic interest in studying and future professional goals have a positive effect on academic performance.

The average score for academic self-confidence was 4.00. This result indicates that the majority of respondents believe in their academic abilities and are confident in their potential in classes and exams. However, the self-management and planning scores were relatively low. The average score for this factor was 3.49, indicating that students face some difficulties in time management, planning tasks in advance, and maintaining attention for long periods of time.

Diagram 1. Comparison of average indicators on psychological factors



Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

Diagram 1 shows that the factors that have the strongest positive impact on students' academic success are socio-psychological support, motivation, and academic self-confidence. At the same time, the relatively high level of stress and emotional tension indicates that students experience psychological pressure in the academic process. This can be observed more clearly, especially during exam periods, stages with increased workload, and situations with increased academic responsibility.

Table 3. Highest average scores on survey items

No.	Question item	Average score
21	Psychological state directly affects a student's academic success	4.52
20	The presence of psychological support services in universities can have a positive impact on students' success	4.45
7	My future plans and professional goals increase my motivation.	4.40
18	My family's support has a positive impact on my academic performance.	4.33
6	Achieving high results motivates me to work harder.	4.32

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

The highest indicators show that students clearly recognize the impact of psychological state on academic success. The majority of respondents considered it important to have psychological support services at universities. This result increases the importance of psychological counseling, adaptation programs, stress management training and student support centers in higher education institutions.

Table 4. Relatively poor performance on survey items

No.	Question item	Average score
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11	I try not to leave tasks until the last day.	3.41
12	I can maintain my attention for a long time during class.	3.44
9	I can plan my time properly.	3.50
16	I consider myself emotionally stable.	3.37
23	Unsuccessful results cause me to lose motivation for a long time.	3.18

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

The relatively low scores indicate that the main difficulties of students are related to self-management, time planning, attention span, and emotional stability. In particular, difficulties in keeping assignments on time and maintaining attention for long periods during class can negatively affect academic performance. This result suggests that it is necessary to not only increase motivation and self-confidence in students, but also to develop practical study skills, time management habits, and stress management strategies.

Table 5. Correlation indicators between psychological factors and academic success

Psychological factor	Correlation coefficient	Direction of communication	Comment
Academic self-confidence	$r = 0.62$	Positive	Strong connection
Motivation	$r = 0.58$	Positive	Medium-strong connection
Self-management and planning	$r = 0.51$	Positive	Medium-strong connection
Social and psychological support	$r = 0.44$	Positive	Medium connection
Emotional stability	$r = 0.37$	Positive	Medium connection
Stress and emotional tension	$r = -0.41$	Negative	Medium negative relationship

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

Correlation analysis shows that the factor with the strongest relationship with academic success is academic self-confidence. According to this result, students who are confident in their abilities, behave more confidently in the face of challenges, and believe that they can achieve their academic goals tend to demonstrate higher academic results.



Motivation was also significantly positively correlated with academic success, indicating that a student's intrinsic interest in education, future professional goals, and desire to achieve high results are among the main psychological mechanisms that enhance their academic performance.

The self-management and planning factor also showed a positive relationship with academic success. This result confirms that skills such as proper time management, task planning, and maintaining attention play an important role in student success. Stress and emotional strain, on the other hand, were negatively related to academic success. This result indicates that exam anxiety, psychological stress, and distraction can weaken students' academic performance.

Table 6. Regression model of key psychological factors influencing academic success

Independent variable	Beta coefficient	Direction of influence	Importance
Motivation	$\beta = 0.31$	Positive	$p < 0.001$
Academic self-confidence	$\beta = 0.29$	Positive	$p < 0.001$
Self-management and planning	$\beta = 0.24$	Positive	$p < 0.01$
Stress and emotional tension	$\beta = -0.21$	Negative	$p < 0.01$
Social and psychological support	$\beta = 0.18$	Positive	$p < 0.05$

Source: Prepared based on the results of a survey conducted by the author.

The overall explanatory power of the model was $R^2 = 0.49$. This result indicates that approximately 49% of the observed variations in students' academic achievement can be explained by the psychological factors included in the study. This indicator indicates that psychological factors play a significant role in shaping academic outcomes.

According to the regression model, the strongest factor influencing academic success was motivation. Students with high levels of motivation are more actively involved in the learning process, strive for high results, and make continuous efforts to achieve their long-term goals. Academic self-confidence was identified as the second most important influencing factor. This result indicates that a student's belief in their abilities directly affects their academic behavior and results.



Discussion

The research results show that the formation of students' academic success cannot be explained only by the level of knowledge and intellectual abilities. Academic results are influenced in a complex way by factors such as motivation, self-confidence, self-management skills, emotional stability, stress resistance and socio-psychological support. In this regard, the results obtained are consistent with the approaches put forward in modern educational psychology.

According to the survey results, the vast majority of students accepted that psychological state directly affects academic success. This indicator shows that students understand the role of emotional and psychological factors during academic activities. The high indicator regarding the importance of psychological support services in universities in particular indicates the need to expand student-oriented psychological services in higher education institutions.

High levels of academic self-confidence indicate that students' belief in their abilities plays an important role in their academic behavior. Students with high self-confidence are more resilient in the face of difficult tasks, and they perceive failures as opportunities for development rather than as personal weaknesses. This makes their attitude towards academic activities more positive (Ramiz and Vakil, 2020).

High motivation indicators are related to students' future professional goals and personal development aspirations. The high score on the item "My future plans and professional goals increase my motivation" in the survey shows that students take academic activities more seriously when they associate education with future career opportunities. This result indicates the importance of using motivational strategies related to students' professional goals in the educational process.

However, the indicators for self-management and planning were relatively low compared to other factors. This result indicates that some students have difficulty in time management, completing tasks on time, and maintaining attention for a long time. For academic success to be sustainable,



students need to develop not only motivation, but also the skills to plan, self-control, and use learning strategies.

The results regarding stress and emotional tension are also noteworthy. The respondents' answers show that exam anxiety and psychological tension can negatively affect students' concentration and academic performance. The negative correlation of stress with academic success in the correlation analysis further strengthens this result. In this regard, it is advisable to implement psychological awareness measures for students to manage stress, reduce exam anxiety, and increase emotional stability.

The high score of the social and psychological support factor indicates that family, friends, and the university environment play an important role in students' academic success. Support from family and social circles increases a student's self-confidence, reduces psychological stress, and forms a more positive attitude towards academic activity. The ease of adaptation to the university environment also has a positive effect on a student's academic activity.

Overall, the research results show that a complex psychological-pedagogical approach is needed to increase students' academic success. This approach should include strengthening motivation, developing academic self-confidence, forming time management skills, reducing stress, and strengthening socio-psychological support mechanisms. (Jabbarov, 2017). Thus, a student's academic success is closely related to his psychological preparation, emotional state, and social support system, in addition to being an indicator of individual knowledge.

The survey found that psychological factors play an important role in students' academic success. While academic self-confidence, motivation, self-control, and social support have a positive impact on student outcomes, stress and emotional strain are key factors that undermine academic success. The results show that for students to achieve high academic results, it is important to support not only their knowledge and skills, but also their psychological resilience, motivation, and emotional well-being.

According to the results of the study, it is considered appropriate to expand psychological



counseling services for students in higher education institutions, organize seminars on stress management, and conduct trainings that develop time planning and self-management skills (Jabbarov, et al, 2020). These measures can create conditions for students to more effectively engage in academic activities, more correctly assess their potential, and achieve successful results.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed that students' academic success is shaped not only by cognitive abilities and subject knowledge, but also by psychological and social factors that operate in interaction. The high indicators obtained for socio-psychological support ($M=4.24$), motivation ($M=4.23$) and academic self-confidence ($M=4.00$) confirm that having a supportive environment, clearly defining future goals and believing in one's own academic capabilities are the main psychological resources for successful learning behavior.

However, relatively low scores on self-management and planning ($M=3.49$), emotional stability ($M=3.37$), and reverse-direction items ($M=3.07$) indicate that students are not always able to translate their motivational potential into sustained academic performance. The $M=3.68$ for the stress and emotional strain indicator suggests that academic pressure is an important risk factor that can weaken concentration, performance persistence, and emotional balance. Thus, although high motivation is necessary for academic success, its transformation into effective results depends on self-regulation, time management, and stress coping skills.

The main scientific result of the study is that academic success is assessed as a multi-component process formed not by individual psychological variables, but by the combined influence of motivation, self-confidence, emotional well-being, self-management and social support. These results justify the importance of assessing student success in higher education institutions not only on the basis of final grades and academic indicators, but also in conjunction with psychological well-being and adjustment criteria.



From a practical perspective, it is necessary to strengthen psychological counseling services in universities, identify early psychological risks, and implement targeted programs that develop students' self-regulation skills. Future studies using larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal research designs, and objective academic indicators will allow for a more precise determination of the causal relationships between psychological factors and academic success.

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