

**Social Support and Its Relationship with Academic Perseverance Among
Students with Determination:
A Field Study on a Sample of Students with Determination at Mohamed
Khider University of Biskra**

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the relationship between social support and academic perseverance among university students with determination. It also sought to identify any statistically significant differences based on gender.

To answer the research questions, the descriptive correlational method was employed on a purposive sample of 45 university students with determination. The study utilized the Social Support Scale and the Academic Perseverance Scale. After data analysis, the following results were obtained:

- The level of social support among students with determination at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra is high.
- The level of academic perseverance among the sample is low.
- There are no statistically significant differences in social support among students with determination based on gender.
- There are no statistically significant differences in academic perseverance among the sample based on gender.
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between social support and academic perseverance among students with determination.

Keywords: Social support, academic perseverance, students with determination.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social support is essential for individuals, helping them navigate daily challenges and achieve social integration, particularly for students with determination. It includes kind words, advice, guidance, useful information, and financial assistance.

Modern societies now recognize individuals with special needs as deserving of education and training to adapt and thrive. This aligns with human rights principles that promote equality and opportunity. Social support fosters love, acceptance, self-esteem, and social interaction, enabling students with determination to contribute actively to society.

In higher education, these students need additional support to maximize their potential. The university stage prepares them for future roles and equips them with professional skills. Academic perseverance is key to motivation and success, reflecting confidence, ambition, resilience, and the ability to overcome challenges. It underpins effective study habits and time management.

While perseverance is vital for all students, it is especially critical for those with determination, helping them adapt, excel, and engage with their environment. Given the limited research on social support and academic perseverance among these students, the current study seeks to address the following main research question:

Main research question:

- What is the nature of the relationship between the level of social support and academic perseverance among university students with determination at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra?

Comparative Research Question:

- Are there gender-based differences in the levels of social support and academic perseverance among students with determination at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra?

Sub-questions:

1. Are there gender-based differences in the level of social support among students with determination?
2. Are there gender-based differences in the level of academic perseverance among students with determination?

1. Research Questions

- What is the level of social support among students with determination?
- What is the level of academic perseverance among students with determination?
- Are there differences in the level of social support between students with determination at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra based on gender?
- Are there differences in the level of academic perseverance between students with determination at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra based on gender?

2.1. Research Hypotheses

General Hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between the level of social support and academic perseverance among students with determination.

Specific Hypotheses:

- The level of social support among students with determination is high.
- The level of academic perseverance among students with determination is high.
- There are statistically significant differences in the level of social support among students with determination based on gender.
- There are statistically significant differences in the level of academic perseverance among students with determination based on gender.

3.1. Research Objectives:

Identify the level of social support among students with determination.

- Examine the nature of the relationship between social support and academic perseverance.
- Determine the level of academic perseverance among students with determination.
- Identify any differences in the levels of social support and academic perseverance based on gender.

2. Defining the Study Concepts

2.1 Social Support

Linguistically, the term *social support* is derived from the Arabic root *sanad*, which refers to anything elevated from the ground near a mountain or valley. Its plural form is *isnād*. Anything that is leaned upon is called *sanad*, and what provides support is termed *musnad* or *sanad*, with the plural form being *musanid*. The verb *tasānada* means to rely on or support someone, while *sānada* signifies aiding or backing someone up (Ibn Manzur, 1990, p. 257).

Conceptually, researcher Ezzat Abdel Hamid (1999) defines social support as the degree to which an individual perceives the availability of emotional, material, and practical support from others, such as "family, relatives, friends, colleagues, and supervisors at work." It also includes receiving advice and guidance from these individuals, fostering deep social relationships with them (Kadour Ben Abbad, 2014, p. 76).

Researchers Asmaa El-Sarsy and Amani Abdel Maqsoud highlight the significance of social support in the school environment, as it enhances motivation, academic achievement, and the ability to reach desired goals during adolescence.

Similarly, Mohamed El-Shenawy and Mohamed Abdel Rahman emphasize that social support refers to "the presence of a sufficient number of individuals in a person's life whom they can turn to when needed, along with the individual's satisfaction with the support available to them" (El-Shenawy & Mohamed El-Sayed, 1994).

Social support is defined as the assistance received by students with special needs from various sources, including family, school, university, friends, and society. It is measured by the score obtained by the student on the social support scale used in this study.

2.2 Academic Perseverance

2.2.1 Definition of Academic Perseverance

Academic perseverance reflects an individual's ability to face and adapt to challenges. It indicates psychological adjustment and mental well-being, encompassing physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and academic aspects (Al-Qatawi & Hussein, 2016, p. 59).

Al-Mutairi (2014) defines academic perseverance as students' ability to delay immediate gratification in pursuit of long-term academic goals (p. 202).

Similarly, Zamzami (2012) describes it as "a commitment to work and attentiveness in speech and action," emphasizing its role as a motivational trait that guides behavior (pp. 11-75).

Perseverance involves sustained effort to overcome obstacles, solve problems, and persist despite setbacks. It serves as a driving force, enabling individuals to maintain effort, resist fatigue, and stay motivated. Overall, academic perseverance is the ability to persist and exert effort to achieve a goal despite difficulties.

3. Methodological Procedures of the Study

3.1 Study Scope

Spatial Scope: The field study was conducted at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, covering both the central campus and the Shatma university complex, including its various faculties (Faculty of Law, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Faculty of Technology), to reach the largest possible number of students with special needs.

Temporal Scope: The field study was conducted from January 2, 2024, to May 13, 2024. During this period, we interacted with students with special needs from the Shatma university complex (including the Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Law and Political Science, and Faculty of Technology) and the central campus in Alia. Key locations for engagement included the student transport station, central cafeteria, various faculties, and university libraries. This strategy was crucial for reaching the maximum number of students with special needs, which was essential for administering the study's measurement tool.

3.2 Study Methodology

To explore the relationship between social support and academic perseverance among students with determinations, we adopted the descriptive correlational method. Madani (2015, p. 40) defines this method as one that collects data about a specific phenomenon and provides a comprehensive interpretation of the facts. Similarly, Al-Mahmoudi (2019, p. 46) describes it as a method for describing the subject using a scientifically sound approach and presenting the findings in numerical formats for easy interpretation.

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3.3 Study Sample

The sample refers to a subset of the population from which field data is collected. It represents the larger population, meaning that a selected group of individuals is considered representative of the research community.

This study was conducted on a sample of 45 students with disabilities from both the Central University and Chetma University Campus at the University of Biskra. The sample was selected purposively, given that the study population is not clearly defined.

3.4 Study Instruments

The present study utilized two instruments for data collection:

- Social Support Scale
- Academic Perseverance Scale

3.4.1 Social Support Scale

3.4.1.1 Scale Description

The Social Support Scale is designed to assess social support levels. It consists of 20 statements distributed across three key dimensions:

1. Emotional Support
2. Financial Support
3. Informational Support

The following table illustrates the distribution of the scale items across these three dimensions.

Table No. (02): Distribution of Social Support Scale Items Across the Three Dimensions

Dimension	Number of Items	Maximum Score	Minimum Score
Emotional Support		35	7
Financial Support		25	5
Informational Support		40	8
Overall Scale Score		100	20

- **Psychometric Properties of the Social Support Scale:**
We relied on the following types of validity to calculate the psychometric properties:

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First: Scale Validity

A. Discriminant Validity through Contrasted Groups Method:

After administering the Social Support Scale, the scores of the sample members were collected and arranged in ascending order. We selected 27% of the highest and lowest scores to define the two groups. Then, we calculated the *t*-test to determine the significance of differences between the means. The following table illustrates this:

Social Support Scale:

Table (03): Displays the means, standard deviations, and *t* value to indicate discriminant validity.

	Group 01 Low Scores		Group 02 High Scores		t-Value	df	p-Value	SignificanceLevel
Social Support Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation				
	56.75	2.4928	78.8750	2.5877	- 17.416	14	0.000	0.05

The results in Table (03) show significant differences between high and low social support levels. The low-level group had a mean of 56.75 (SD = 2.4928), while the high-level group had a mean of 78.785 (SD = 2.5877). With a T-value of 17.416 and a p-value below 0.05, the scale effectively distinguishes between the two groups, confirming its validity.

Secondly: Scale Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the scale, it was measured using the following method:

A- Split-Half Reliability

The scale items were divided into two halves to determine the correlation between them by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficient, which was found to be 0.507. The length was then adjusted using the Spearman-Brown formula, yielding a coefficient of 0.673. This indicates that the scale has an acceptable level of reliability.

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Table No. (04): Demonstrates the split-half reliability of the Social Support Scale

Split-Half Reliability	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Spearman-Brown Coefficient
Social Support Scale	0.507	0.673

Based on the above, it is evident that the Social Support Scale has acceptable validity and reliability indicators, confirming its suitability for use in the current study.

2.1.3.4 Correction of the Social Support Scale:

The maximum score of the scale is 100, indicating a high level of social support, while the minimum score is 20, indicating a low level of social support. This scale includes five response options, scored from (1-5) as follows:

- Strongly Agree = (5) for positive statements, (1) for negative statements.
- Moderately Agree = (4) for positive statements, (2) for negative statements.
- Neutral (Neither Agree nor Disagree) = (3) for both positive and negative statements.
- Moderately Disagree = (2) for positive statements, (4) for negative statements.
- Strongly Disagree = (1) for positive statements, (5) for negative statements.

The negative statements consist of five items, specifically items: 4, 5, 10, 18, and 19.

Table No. (05) illustrates the levels of social support based on the scale scores

Levels of Social Support	Score
high	61>
Moderate	52 to 61
Low	51≤

Academic Perseverance Scale:

1-2-4 Scale Description

2-2-4 Psychometric Properties of Academic Perseverance:

Several methods were used to calculate the psychometric properties:

First: Scale Validity:**A- Extreme Groups Validity:**

This type of validity aims to ensure the scale's discriminative ability between high and low scorers. The following table illustrates this:

Table No. (06): Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviations, and T-Value for Indicating Discriminant Validity – Academic Perseverance Scale

	Group 01 Low Scores		Group 02 High Scores		t- Value	df	p- Value	Significance Level
Social Support	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation				
	14.50	0.926	28.38	2.264	16.045	14	0.000	0.05

Table No. (06) illustrates the discriminatory power of the scale between individuals with high and low scores. The **t-test** value was estimated at **-16.045**, and the p-value was lower than the significance level. This indicates statistically significant differences between high and low scorers, suggesting that the scale demonstrates good validity.

Second: Scale Reliability**A- Split-Half Method:**

The reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated using the split-half method, where the scale items were divided into two halves to determine the correlation between them. The Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be 0.784. After applying the Spearman-Brown correction formula, the coefficient increased to 0.876, indicating that the scale has good reliability.

Table No. (07): Displays the reliability coefficient using the split-half method for the **Academic Perseverance Scale**.

Split-Half Reliability	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Spearman-Brown Coefficient
Academic Perseverance Scale	0.784	0.876

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Cronbach's Alpha Method

The reliability coefficient was calculated using **Cronbach's Alpha**, and the overall scale coefficient was estimated at **0.839**. This value indicates that the scale has an acceptable level of reliability, as shown in the following table:

Table No. (08): Displays the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the Academic Perseverance Scale

	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Academic Perseverance Scale	0.839

From the above, we conclude that the validity and reliability values of the Academic Perseverance Scale show good indicators, confirming its suitability for use in the current study.

3.2.5 Scoring Method

The four response options—Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree—are assigned the following scores: 4, 3, 2, 1 for positive items and 1, 2, 3, 4 for negative items. The minimum possible score on this scale is 10, while the maximum possible score is 40. (Ben Ali, 2014, pp. 103-104).

4. Presentation of Field Study Results

4.1 Presentation of the First Sub-Hypothesis Results

The hypothesis states:

"The level of social support for students with determination is moderately high."

To verify this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was conducted, along with the calculation of the hypothetical mean. The results are presented in the following table:

Table No. (09): Displays the results of the one-sample t-test.

Variable	Sample Size (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	t-value	DF	Significance (p-value)
Social Support Level	45	71.7333	11.58	60	41.546	44	0.000

Based on the obtained results, the mean score was 71.73 with a standard deviation of 11.582. It is also observed that the hypothetical mean is lower than the calculated mean. The t-value was 41.546, and the p-value was 0.000, which is

less than the 0.01 significance level. These values indicate statistical significance, confirming that the social support level among students with determination is high.

Thus, the study's hypothesis stating that *"the level of social support among students with determination is high"* has been confirmed.

4.2 Presentation of the Second Sub-Hypothesis Results

The hypothesis states:

"The level of academic perseverance among students with determination is high."

To verify this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was conducted along with the calculation of the hypothetical mean. The results are presented in the following table:

Table No. (10): Displays the results of the one-sample t-test.

Variable	Sample Size (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	t-value	DF	Significance (p-value)
Social Support Level	0.000	44	31.810	25	5.05645	23.9778	45

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 23 outputs

Based on the results presented in Table No. (10), the mean score was 23.97 with a standard deviation of 5.05. This mean is lower than the hypothetical mean. The t-value was 31.810, with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.01 significance level. This indicates statistical significance, meaning that academic perseverance among students with determination is low.

Thus, the study's hypothesis stating that *"the level of academic perseverance among students with determination is high"* was not confirmed.

4.3 Presentation of the Third Sub-Hypothesis Results

The hypothesis states:

"There are statistically significant differences in the level of social support among students with determination based on gender (male/female)."

To test this hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was conducted, as shown in the following table:

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Table No. (11): Displays the differences between means and the t-value for the sample's social support scores based on gender.

Scale	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	t-Value	p-Value	Significance at 0.05 Level
Social Support	Male	13	74.23	9.391	43	0.920	0.363	Not Significant
	Female	32	70.72	12.353				

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 23 outputs

Table No. (11) shows that the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, making it statistically insignificant. The mean score for males was 74.23 with a standard deviation of 9.391, while females scored a mean of 70.72 with a standard deviation of 12.353. As for the t-test, its value was estimated at 0.920. Accordingly, we can conclude that "there are no gender differences in the level of social support."

Thus, the study hypothesis stating that there are gender differences in the level of social support was not confirmed.

4.4 Presentation of the Fourth Sub-Hypothesis Results:

This hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences in the level of academic perseverance among students with disabilities attributed to gender."

To test this hypothesis, we used an independent samples t-test, as shown in the following table:

Table No. (12): Differences Between Means and t-Value for the Academic Perseverance Scale by Gender.

Scale	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	t-Value	p-Value	Significance at 0.05 Level
Academic Perseverance	Male	4.387	26.08	13	0.076	1.821	43	Not Significant
	Female	5.123	23.13	32				

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 23 outputs

According to the table above, the mean score for males was 26.08 with a standard deviation of 4.387, while the mean score for females was 23.13 with a standard deviation of 5.123. The t-value was 1.821, and the p-value was greater than the significance level. Therefore, we conclude that "there are no statistically significant differences in academic perseverance among students with disabilities based on gender (male/female)."

As a result, the study hypothesis suggesting the existence of statistically significant differences in the level of academic perseverance among students with disabilities based on gender was not supported.

4.5 Presentation of Results Related to the General Hypothesis

The general hypothesis states: "There is a correlation between the level of social support and academic perseverance among students with disabilities."

To verify this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the total score of the sample on the Social Support Scale and the total score on the Academic Perseverance Scale, as shown in the following table:

Table 13: Pearson correlation coefficients between social support and academic perseverance

Correlation	Academic Perseverance
Social Support	0.339*
Significance Level	0.05

The results shown in the table above indicate a positive and statistically significant correlation between the level of social support and the level of academic perseverance, which was estimated at 0.339 at a significance level of 0.05. Thus, the general hypothesis of the study has been confirmed.

Interpretation of the Study Results:

1. Interpretation of the First Sub-Hypothesis:

- Table (08) indicates a high level of social support among students with disabilities, primarily due to the nature of the sample. Social support strengthens self-affirmation and confidence through increased assistance from their social network. It serves multiple positive functions, making it essential, especially for students with disabilities, as it enhances their social effectiveness.
- **Informational support:** Students with disabilities receive guidance, organization of thoughts, and task performance improvement. Families provide intellectual support by solving problems, teaching behavior, aiding decision-making, and increasing self-awareness.
- **Emotional support:** Families offer care, a sense of value, comfort during illness, self-confidence, and encouragement for social interaction.

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- **Financial support:** Families help solve financial issues, meet needs, provide rewards for good behavior, and give allowances for personal expenses.

2. Interpretation of the Second Sub-Hypothesis:

- Table (09) shows a low level of academic perseverance among students with disabilities, influenced by psychological and social factors. Herrera noted that perseverance is affected by parental education, family socioeconomic status, academic performance, intellectual abilities, skills, and motivation.
- Snape and Miller (2008, p. 224) identified personal traits, family support, and social encouragement as influencing factors on academic perseverance.

3. Interpretation of the Third Sub-Hypothesis:

- Table (10) indicates no statistically significant differences in social support levels among students with disabilities based on gender.
- Both male and female students experience similar levels of social support, as all participants perceive this support similarly, regardless of its source. Support from family or friends, whether moral, financial, or educational, is perceived equally by both genders.

4. Interpretation of the Fourth Sub-Hypothesis:

- Table (11) shows no significant differences in academic perseverance between male and female students with disabilities.
- Both genders exhibit similar perseverance, likely due to shared psychological and social characteristics influenced by their disabilities. Students with disabilities face similar life pressures, including societal judgments on appearance and exposure to negative comments, which can impact their self-esteem.
- Al-Zahran (1972) emphasized that self-comparison influences self-esteem; comparing oneself to a less competent group can boost self-esteem, while comparison with a more competent group can lower it.

5. Interpretation of the General Hypothesis:

Through this hypothesis, we sought to examine the relationship between the level of social support and academic perseverance among students with determination. The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation. This can be attributed to the nature of the study sample— the more support and assistance students with determination receive from their social network, the stronger their self-affirmation becomes. This is because social support serves multiple functions that positively impact individuals, acting as a crucial source of effective support that they need.

Social interactions characterized by social support generate a sense of positive emotions in individuals, fostering their adaptability, enhancing self-confidence, and reinforcing self-affirmation. This, in turn, contributes to greater effectiveness and success. Furthermore, the availability of social support for students with determination enhances their academic perseverance, enabling them to tolerate uncertainty and face academic challenges more effectively. As a result, their motivation for achievement increases, leading to greater enthusiasm for completing academic tasks.

Conclusion:

This study concludes that social support plays a critical role in helping students manage emotions and cope with stress effectively, without compromising their decision-making abilities. It is closely linked to academic perseverance, as both enable students to handle challenges and navigate stressful situations constructively. Social support is also a key indicator of social adaptation. Therefore, social support is vital for the academic success of students with disabilities, contributing to self-fulfillment, goal attainment, and adaptation to both themselves and their environment. Similarly, academic perseverance significantly impacts various aspects of their lives.

Study Findings: The results of the study led to the following conclusions:

- The general hypothesis was confirmed, indicating a positive correlation between social support and academic perseverance among students with disabilities.

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- The first partial hypothesis was confirmed, showing that the level of social support among students with disabilities is high.
- The second partial hypothesis was not confirmed, as the level of academic perseverance among students with disabilities was found to be low.
- The third partial hypothesis was not confirmed, revealing no statistically significant differences in social support levels among students with disabilities based on gender.
- The fourth partial hypothesis was not confirmed, indicating no statistically significant differences in academic perseverance among students with disabilities based on gender.

From this study, we can conclude that social support and academic perseverance are two highly significant variables influenced by multiple complex factors. Therefore, further research is needed to identify the key variables affecting these two factors and to explore ways to enhance and develop them among students with disabilities.

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