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Academic Perseverance and Its Relationship to Social Responsibility among Students of the College of Education for Girls

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Abstract: The current study aimed to identify the level of academic perseverance among students of the College of Education for Girls at Tikrit University, and the statistically significant differences according to specialization (scientific – humanities) and type of study (morning – evening). The research sample consisted of (120) fourth-grade students, randomly selected, representing (24%) of the research population. The researcher adopted Al-Khazraji's scale (2017) to measure perseverance. The results showed that the research sample had a high level of perseverance, no statistically significant differences between scientific and humanitarian specializations, and statistically significant differences in favor of morning study. In light of the results, the researcher formulated a number of recommendations and proposals.

Keywords: Academic Perseverance, Social Responsibility, University Students, College of Education for Girls

1. Introduction

Introduction to the Research

First: The Research Problem:

The university is considered one of the beacons of knowledge, responsible for preparing its students to meet the demands of the modern age. It equips them with knowledge and skills, helping them build their futures with a spirit of interaction and psychological well-being. Universities play a significant role in healthy social adjustment and behavioral modification. Therefore, it has become incumbent upon universities to consider the circumstances surrounding students, especially new students who are subject to various pressures and problems that increase their social anxiety [1]. A student's academic success depends on their level of motivation to study. The stronger the motivation, the better their perseverance. Conversely, a student's enthusiasm decreases, their inclination to persevere diminishes, and their academic achievement suffers when their motivation to persevere declines [1].

Researchers observed changes in the level of perseverance motivation among university students, attributable to numerous factors, including the challenges and problems they encounter in their academic lives, as well as societal changes related to the social responsibility students experience. This was confirmed by a study by one of whose proposals included exploring the relationship between perseverance and social responsibility [2].

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Second: Research Objectives:

1- To identify the level of perseverance among female students at the College of Education for Women at Tikrit University.

2- To determine the statistically significant differences in perseverance based on the variable of specialization (scientific – humanities).

3- To determine the statistically significant differences in perseverance based on the variable of study type (morning – evening).

Third: Research Scope:

The current research is limited to fourth-year female students at the College of Education for Women, from both scientific and humanities specializations, and according to the type of study (morning – evening), for the academic year (2023-2024).

Fourth: Defining Terms:

Perseverance:

- It is a non-cognitive skill as important as cognitive skills. It is the perseverance and determination to face and overcome obstacles, achieve long-term goals, and maintain them for many years. It requires hard work, resilience, enthusiasm, and belief in the goal [3].

- It is high academic achievement despite the presence of risk factors that usually indicate low academic performance. Thus, academic perseverance is defined as the process and results that reflect the life story of an academically successful individual despite the obstacles they face. Operationally, academic perseverance is defined by the score a student obtains on an academic perseverance scale [4].

- Perseverance is a phenomenon and process that reflects positive adaptation despite adversity. In this context, there are two variables: (exposure to adversity, achieving adaptation despite adversity)[5].

Social Responsibility:

- Othman (1986) defined social responsibility as "individual responsibility towards the group. It is the individual's responsibility to himself regarding the group to which he belongs. It is a specific self-formation towards the group to which he belongs, in which the individual is personally responsible for the group, meaning he is responsible to himself, or that the image of the group is, in reality, reflected in him. Social responsibility expresses the degree of concern, understanding, and participation in the group and develops gradually through education and socialization." [6]

- The operational definition of social responsibility is "the sum of the scores obtained by the students on the social responsibility scale used in this study." [6].

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

First: Perseverance

The concept of GRIT (Gravity-Intensity Intervention) was introduced by Angela Duckworth, a psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the United States, as a new concept in positive psychology. She termed it GRIT as a non-cognitive ability and defined it as perseverance, determination, and passion for long-term goals. It is a strong tendency towards any activity in which the individual invests a greater amount of their energy, more time, and persistence, continuing to try for many years in order to accomplish tasks, achieve goals, and overcome frustrations and obstacles [7]. This is similar to what Galton proposed a century ago. He found that ability alone does not guarantee success in any field and cannot be described in isolation; rather, it must be combined with perseverance, enthusiasm, and hard work. He concluded that scientific achievement in all fields can be explained through these dimensions, which are considered distinctive personality traits and common dimensions among successful individuals [8].

The concept was disseminated globally and formulated as a fundamental element of success in various aspects of life and an important facet of personality. Its aim was to understand why some people work harder and utilize their resources and energies more effectively than others, and why some individuals, despite possessing high levels of intelligence, fail to achieve their goals due to inconsistent performance. It is based on

several theories, such as goal commitment, perseverance, and the ability to focus and retain information over time. Its application does not vary according to gender or age [7]. Although the scale was described as having two dimensions, several studies have tested it and confirmed that it is a one-dimensional scale, not a two-dimensional one. These studies used the scale as consisting of only one dimension: perseverance and determination (GRIT), which is one of the strongest factors associated with academic achievement [9,10].

Al-Sharman and Al-Zaghoul (2020) emphasize that this concept describes individuals' tendency to strive diligently to achieve long-term goals and their ability to overcome challenges, obstacles, and failures. It requires attention, focus, and the ability to persevere and continue for extended periods, sometimes spanning years of hard work. This may explain the variation among individuals in their academic achievement and professional accomplishment, its positive correlation with GPA, and its connection to numerous other variables such as personality traits, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and academic and professional achievement.

Based on the above, the researcher concludes that perseverance is one of the most important variables for students. It is defined as persistence, determination, and continuity in achieving long-term goals and maintaining effort. It is also described as courage, overcoming fear, patience, endurance, and resilience. Perseverance is essential for explaining individual differences in academic success.

Dimensions of Perseverance:

1- Tolerance for Ambiguity: This is represented by the student's willingness to accept unfamiliar, complex, contradictory, or unpredictable learning situations, accepting matters with their various interpretations and potential outcomes, and their ability to interact constructively with these situations.

2- Facing Challenges: This is represented by the student's continued effort and engagement in difficult and stimulating tasks, even if they experience failure, in order to achieve success, thus reinforcing the value of effort. 3- Achievement Motivation: This is represented by the student's desire and pursuit of success and excellence by performing academic tasks better, more efficiently, quickly, and proficiently [11].

The Importance of Perseverance:

Due to its importance, Arthur Costa and Bina Kaleck (2003: 21) placed perseverance at the forefront of habits of mind. Perseverance not only means that the student arrives at the correct solution, but also indicates the ability to endure hardship in the face of obstacles and difficulties.

Perseverance describes a student's engagement in academic tasks and the development of effective learning strategies to continue their studies. It reflects their level of participation in academic activities, completion of tasks on time, mastery of coursework, and decision-making to undertake challenging tasks in order to achieve success [12].

Perseverance is linked to several variables that influence a university student's success or failure in achieving their academic goals. The results of Wolters and Hussain's study (2014: 112) indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between academic perseverance and self-efficacy, task value, and academic achievement. Conversely, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between academic perseverance and academic procrastination. The results of Ghazala Bint Bishr Al-Mutairi's study (2014) indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between academic perseverance and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, the results of Rojas's study (2015) indicated that academic perseverance mediates the relationship between creativity and academic achievement among university students. The results of a study by Littrell (2016) indicate that perseverance contributes to predicting academic procrastination among university students.

It is clear from the above that perseverance is a crucial factor in academic performance and one of the essential requirements for achieving academic success. There is no success without perseverance and effort. Perseverance is also a cornerstone of effective study

skills, and there is no benefit in focusing on studying without perseverance. Therefore, perseverance is one of the factors influencing academic performance.

Second: Social Responsibility

Thanks to recent developments, the concept of social responsibility is increasingly being discussed. Intellectuals, politicians, thinkers, and civil society activists are talking about it, and it is widely covered in the media. However, some may not have a clear understanding of this concept and its features. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the nature of social responsibility.

And to instill this concept in the minds of community membersn [13].

The Concept of Social Responsibility:

Social responsibility is an ethical theory based on the idea that any entity, whether an individual or an organization, bears responsibility towards society as a whole. Furthermore, every organization or individual must fulfill this responsibility to maintain a balance between the economic, environmental, and social aspects. Social responsibility is not limited to commercial organizations; it pertains to every individual and how their actions affect the environment. This responsibility can be positive, by taking actions that directly promote the goals of society, or negative, by avoiding harmful actions. [13]

Students' Social Responsibility

Students' social responsibility is defined as their social actions and behaviors that affect their surrounding environment—socially, environmentally, or religiously. Ethical factors are as important as culture and knowledge in society, thus mitigating negative impacts on everyone.[11] Students need to be more aware of their surroundings, take responsibility for their actions and mistakes, and strive to develop and improve their character for the benefit of all. This will make it easier to notice the difference in the surrounding environment. These details contribute to development and improvement, leading to the building of a cohesive society and a healthy environment in which future generations can grow up[14].

Universities' Social Responsibility

Universities' social responsibility is defined as the impact that universities have on society and the environment. It is worth noting that this type of social responsibility differs from that of companies, institutions, and organizations because its effects are related to education and research specific to educational institutions only. The social responsibility of universities can be activated through the development of educational curricula and teaching methods, the dissemination of knowledge, and the promotion of research, thereby enhancing the quality of life for individuals and society and elevating them to a better state. [15]

Dimensions of Social Responsibility:

These dimensions are represented by the economic, legal, and social dimensions.

The Economic Dimension: This requires the rational use of resources to produce high-quality goods and services, distributing returns fairly among the various factors of production. This dimension also requires fair competition by respecting the rules of competition and not harming competitors, in addition to preventing monopolies and harming consumers. Furthermore, this dimension requires benefiting from technological advancements and using technology to address environmental damage.

The Legal Dimension: This dimension requires conscious and voluntary adherence to the laws and regulations governing various sectors of society[16]. This includes respecting consumer protection laws against harmful substances, protecting children's health and culture, protecting the environment by preventing pollution of all kinds, preserving and developing natural resources, and disposing of product waste after consumption. The legal dimension of social responsibility also requires achieving justice and safety, whether by reducing workplace injuries, improving working conditions, preventing the employment of the elderly and minors, providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities, or respecting human rights and preventing discrimination based on gender or religion.

The social dimension requires observing the ethical standards and prevailing social values in society by respecting customs and traditions and considering ethical aspects of

consumption. Therefore, the focus is on products and services that align with the quality of life in the community, and on providing basic needs for the community [16].

Third: Previous Studies

- Abu Saif's study (2000): "Some Prevalent Cognitive Styles Among a Sample of University Students and Their Relationship to Academic Specialization and Some Personality Variables."

This study aimed to explore the relationship between certain cognitive styles (cognitive dependency/independence, cognitive deliberation/impulsiveness) and some personality variables among university students.

- The 1990 study by Serry aimed to investigate the relationship between the level of ambition in high and low achievement-motivated individuals and their problem-solving abilities. Serry hypothesized that individuals with high achievement motivation possess a strong ambition to reach a solution, and that this ambition is manifested in their serious attempts and continuous perseverance. The study's results revealed that students with high achievement ambition performed significantly better in problem-solving than their peers with low achievement ambition. It was also found that the ambition level of the study participants fluctuated during problem-solving tasks, increasing after successful performance and decreasing after unsuccessful performance. Furthermore, statistically significant differences were found between males and females in achievement ambition levels, favoring females (Serry, 1990).

- The study by Abdul Rahman et al. (1998) aimed to identify the role of certain psychological variables, namely social skills, assertive behavior, and social anxiety, in altruistic and remorseful behavior towards other students. This study used the Social Anxiety Scale by Alary (1963). The original scale contains 27 items measuring two dimensions: anxiety and interaction, and confrontation anxiety.

- The study by Al-Yousifi (2006) aimed to identify the relationship between academic achievement motivation and social anxiety among female students at the College of Education for Girls. The study concluded that the level of academic achievement among female students at the College of Education for Girls was high, the level of social anxiety among female students at the College of Education for Girls was moderate (ranging from 22 to 66), and there was a statistically significant positive correlation between academic achievement motivation and social anxiety among female students at the College of Education for Girls.

2. Materials and Method

Research Procedures

In this study, the researcher adopted the descriptive-correlational approach, which focuses on collecting, classifying, and categorizing data and facts, as well as analyzing them appropriately and accurately, and interpreting the results obtained. This section describes the field study procedures undertaken by the researcher to achieve the research objectives, including defining the methodology used. It also covers the research population, the research sample, the research instrument, verifying its validity and reliability, and the statistical processing used to analyze the results.

First: Research Methodology: The researcher used the descriptive approach because it is one of the appropriate scientific research methods for studying correlational relationships between variables. It accurately describes the phenomenon as it exists in reality and expresses it both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative descriptions describe the phenomenon and explain its characteristics, while quantitative descriptions provide a realistic account that clarifies the extent or magnitude of the phenomenon [2]

Second: The research population: The population refers to all individuals who possess data on the phenomenon that is within the scope of the research [17]. The current research included all fourth-year female students from (9) departments in the College of Education for Girls, except for the Home Economics Department, totaling (509)* students, with (203) in the scientific specialization, (306) in the humanities specialization, (391) from the morning study, and (118) from the evening study. Table (1) illustrates this:

Table (1) Research population by (department, specialization and grade)

	Section	Specialization	Fourth		the total
			Morning	Evening	
1	Quranic Studies	Humanities specialization	19	12	31
2	Arabic Language		28	17	45
3	English Language		111	31	142
4	History		17	16	33
5	Educational and Psychological Sciences		18	15	33
6	Home Economics		-	-	-
7	Geography		22	2	22
8	Mathematics	Scientific specialization	66	6	74
9	Chemistry		40	5	45
10	biology		70	14	84
the total			391	118	509

(*) The data was obtained from the Registration Division of the College of Education for Girls for the academic year (2023/2024)

Third: The Research Sample:

A sample is a part of the population that possesses the same characteristics as the population. The selection of the sample aims to obtain results that can be generalized to the entire population. The numerous characteristics of a population must be reflected in the sample drawn from that population [18]. After defining the research population, a random sample was selected from only six departments, totaling (120) fourth-grade female students. This represents (24%) of the research population. Specifically, (60) students were from the science track, (60) from the humanities track, (94) from the morning program (both tracks), and (26) from the evening program (both tracks).

Table (2) illustrates this: Table (2) Research Sample by (Department, Specialization, and Grade)

	Section	Specialization	Fourth		the total
			Morning	Evening	
1	Quranic Studies	Humanities specialization	15	5	20
5	Educational and Psychological Sciences		12	8	20
7	Geography		20	-	20
8	Mathematics	Scientific specialization	12	8	20
9	Chemistry		19	1	20
10	biology		16	4	20
the total			94	26	80

Fourth: Research Instrument (Persistence Regulation Scale):

To achieve the objectives of the current research, it was necessary to adopt the scale developed by Al-Khazraji (2017) to measure perseverance among female students at the College of Education for Women.

- Scale Description:

This scale was originally developed by Al-Khazraji (2017) to measure perseverance. It consists of 40 items formulated in both positive and negative ways. To obtain the total score, the following alternatives were selected: (Always applies to me, Sometimes applies to me, Never applies to me) (1-3), depending on whether the item is positive or negative. The following weights are assigned for positive items (3, 2, 1 respectively), and for negative items (1, 2, 3 respectively). Therefore, the highest score on the scale is 200, and the lowest score is 40, with a hypothetical mean of 120.

Psychometric Properties of the Scale:

- Face Validity:

Validity is a crucial characteristic for constructing tests and scales. Validity means that a valid scale actually measures what it is designed to measure (Malham, 2000: 273). Face validity was established by presenting the scale to a group of experts and referees specializing in educational and psychological sciences. The researcher adopted a consensus rate of 80% or higher among the experts, and therefore, no items on the scale were excluded.

Pilot Application:

After establishing the face validity of the perseverance scale, the researcher administered the scale to a sample of 20 female students from the first and fourth grades of the Quranic Sciences and Chemistry departments (10 students from each department). The purpose of the pilot was to determine the clarity or ambiguity of the items for the students and to calculate the time taken to complete the scale. The average response time was 30 minutes.

- Scale Reliability:

Reliability means ensuring that the same results are obtained if the test is administered again to the same group under similar conditions. This implies a minimal impact of chance or randomness on the test results (Abdul Rahman, 1988: 196). To calculate the reliability of the perseverance scale, the researcher used the test-retest method. The scale was administered to a sample of (30) female students (15) from the Geography Department and (15) from the Life Sciences Department. After (14) days, the test was administered again to the same sample. Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the correlation coefficient between the two administrations was found to be (0.81), which is a good reliability coefficient. Thus, the scale is suitable for final application.

Fifth: Final Application:

After the researcher completed the necessary procedures for the scale (Appendix 1), she administered it to the final research sample of (120) female students from November 10, 2023, to November 18, 2023.

Sixth: Statistical Methods: In the statistical analysis of the data presented in the current research, the researcher used several statistical methods, including:

1- Pearson's correlation coefficient: to determine the reliability coefficient using the test-retest method.

2- One-sample t-test: used to determine the significance of the difference between the mean scores of the final application sample and the theoretical mean of the scale.

3- Independent samples t-test: to determine the differences between specialization and grade level on the items of the research scale.

3. Result and Discussion

Research Results, Discussion, and Interpretation

First Objective: To identify the level of perseverance among female students at the College of Education for Women, Tikrit University: To achieve this objective, the perseverance scale was administered to the research sample. The arithmetic mean was (145.240) points, and the standard deviation was (4.103), while the hypothetical mean of

the scale was (120). After testing the difference between the two means using a one-sample t-test, the calculated t-value was (16.30), which is higher than the critical t-value (1.96) at a significance level of (0.05). This indicates that the research sample possesses a high level of perseverance. Table (3) illustrates this.

Table (3) One-Sample T-Value on the Perseverance Scale

Number	arithmetic mean	standard deviation	hypothetical mean	degrees of freedom	t-value		significance level	judgment
					calculated	tabular		
120	145,240	4,103	120	120	120	1,96	0.05	Function

The researcher attributes this result to the nature of the components of perseverance, which include beliefs and attentional behavior, as confirmed by Karoly (1993). University students can engage in various forms of behavior and are at an age where they possess the ability to focus their attention, but their beliefs are still developing. Beliefs require sufficient experience, and intellectual convictions and beliefs do not fully develop until later stages of life. This is a result of societal changes linked to the social responsibility students experience, as confirmed by a study by Al-Rawaf (2003).

Second Objective: Statistically significant differences in perseverance according to the variable of specialization (scientific – humanities). In order to identify differences in perseverance according to the specialization variable, the arithmetic mean for the scientific specialization was (142.101) while the standard deviation was (4.48), while in the humanities specialization the arithmetic mean was (140.285) while the standard deviation was (4.20). After using the t-test for two independent samples, the extracted t-value was (1.121), which is less than the tabulated value (1.96) at the level of (0.05), and Table (4) illustrates this.

Table (4) T-test for two independent samples on the perseverance scale according to the specialization variable (scientific - humanities)

Specialization	Number	arithmetic mean	standard deviation	t-value		significance level	judgment
				calculated	tabular		
Scientific	60	142,101	4,48	1,121	1,96	0.05	Non Function
Humanities	60	140,285	4,20				

This result indicates no statistically significant differences between scientific and humanities disciplines. This finding suggests that female students in both disciplines possess the ability to regulate their behavior in accordance with their age, a stage of intellectual, moral, and educational maturity, and are capable of monitoring, reinforcing, and controlling their behavior.

Third Objective: Statistically significant differences in perseverance according to the variable of study type (morning – evening).

To identify differences in perseverance based on the study type variable (morning – evening), the mean for the science specialization was (70.442) while the standard deviation was (4.34). For the humanities specialization, the mean was (70.365) while the standard deviation was (4.99). After using the independent samples t-test, the extracted t-value was (1.074), which is less than the critical value (1.96) at the (0.05) level. There are statistically significant differences between the study type (morning – evening) and the study type variable, favoring the morning study. Table (5) illustrates this.

Table (5): Independent Samples T-test on the Perseverance Scale Based on the Study Type Variable (morning – evening)

Study type	Number	arithmetic mean	standard deviation	t-value		significance level	judgment
				calculated	tabular		
Morning	60	145,442	,434	16,074	1,96	0.05	Function in favor of morning study
Evening	60	102,365	,499				

This result indicates that perseverance, represented in the reaction, which indicates the reinforcement of perseverance through the learner's feeling of pride and satisfaction due to the progress he makes towards achieving the goals (Immerman, 2007) Schunk, through the learner's practice of academic activities that in turn lead to improving his academic performance: as the learner's performance and practice of academic activities and his success in accomplishing them generates in him a feeling of pride and satisfaction, which is an incentive to practice more academic activities, which is reflected positively on his academic achievement, thus achieving the excellence he seeks. Given that perseverance is a fundamental pillar of social responsibility, directly and positively linked to academic performance and achievement, as confirmed by the results of numerous previous studies, such as [study name missing], the following conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions are presented:

4. Conclusion

Conclusions: After statistically analyzing the data related to the current research, the following results were shown:

- 1- The current research sample possesses a high level of perseverance.
- 2- There are no statistically significant differences between scientific and humanities specializations.
- 3- There are statistically significant differences between morning and evening classes, favoring morning classes.

Recommendations: In light of the research findings, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- University faculty members should raise awareness among their students about the importance and necessity of perseverance and its impact on their academic achievement through effective guidance sessions.
- 2- Training courses and workshops should be held for female students to equip them with perseverance skills.

Recommendations: In light of the above, the researcher suggests the following:

- 1- Conducting a correlational study between perseverance and several other variables such as motivation, test anxiety, learning styles, creative or logical thinking, etc., among both university and school students.
- 2- Conducting a comparative study of perseverance levels among female students in four different grade levels.

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