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# Investigation of the Relationship between Motivational Persistence, Procrastination Tendency and Achievement Orientation

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The purpose of this research is to determine the effect of procrastination tendencies and achievement orientation on the motivational persistence of university students and to examine the relationship between them. For this purpose, in the research the relational survey model, one of the quantitative research methods, was employed. 254 students participated in the study conducted on university students. Motivational Persistence Scale, Tuckman Procrastination Scale and 2 × 2 Achievement Goal Orientation Scale were applied to the participants. The data obtained were analyzed using correlation and multiple regression analysis. According to the results of correlation and regression analysis, a significant negative correlation was found between motivational persistence and procrastination tendency. It has been observed that students who have high motivational persistence to pursue long-term goals and pursue current goals have less tendency to procrastinate, and students who have motivational persistence to repeat unachievable goals do not have a relationship with motivation. The positive relationship between motivational persistence and achievement orientation is clearly seen in students who have learning approach achievement orientation. Based on the findings, it can be said that learning orientations should be supported in learning environments and increasing the awareness of faculty members and students about procrastination tendencies and achievement orientations in increasing the level of motivational persistence will contribute to the learning process.

Keywords: motivation, motivational persistence, procrastination tendency, achievement goal orientation, achievement

# INTRODUCTION

Under the conditions of Turkey, students generally receive education and training services in crowded classrooms. Teachers, especially in this way, encounter students with different characteristics in classrooms with large numbers and try to diversify their educational activities according to the situation. While some students follow the lessons closely, participate in the lessons, ask questions where they do not understand, and repeat the information, some students may remain uninterested in to the lessons despite the efforts of their teachers. While some students do not do any homework, some students may assign themselves to reading, researching and doing additional studies even if they are not asked. Although there are many variables in understanding the reasons for this diversity in students' behaviors related to courses, the concept of motivation, procrastination, perseverance and determination has an important place.

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In some studies, it has been revealed that one of the most important variables associated with achievement is motivation (Karakış, 2020; Kuloğlu, 2020; Süren, 2019; Seyis, Aydın, & Shooting, 2017; Yazıcı & Altun, 2013). On the other hand, the procrastination tendency of students causes them to be less successful (Sop, 2020; Kandemir, Palancı, İlhan & Avcı, 2017; Bulut & Ocak, 2017; Çetin & Ceyhan, 2018), as students become satisfied with their education, their procrastination tendency may decrease (Sop, 2020). It can be said that there is a positive relationship between academic procrastination and social media addiction (Özçelik Bozkurt, 2020; Tekin, 2019), self-esteem (Ekici, Oruc, & Colakoglu, 2018), hopelessness, family criticism, being unsure of what one is doing (Odacı & Kaya, 2018), fear of negative evaluation (Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2015). On the other hand, there is a negative relationship between academic procrastination and self-regulation (Filiz & Doğan, 2021; Çetin & Ceyhan, 2018), self-efficacy (Filiz & Doğan, 2021; Gün, Turabik & Atanur Baskan, 2020; Naktiyok & Kızıl, 2018; Gültekin & Gürer, 2018; Korkmaz, 2018; Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2015), learned helplessness (Ekinci & Gökler, 2017), cognitive awareness (Vural & Gündüz, 2019), organizational support (Naktiyok & Kızıl, 2018), responsibility, friendship, being peaceful, honesty, tolerance (Ayyıldız & Dilmaç, 2017), and intrinsic motivation (Yeşiltaş, 2020). In addition, studies have shown that family attitude has a significant effect on the formation and reduction of academic procrastination (Aydın & Gökçe, 2018; Ulukaya & Bilge, 2014; Özzorlu & İnan Kaya, 2019).

Based on the studies in the literature, this study aims to reveal the relationship between motivational persistence, procrastination tendency and achievement goal orientation, and also seeks an answer to the question of whether achievement goal orientation predicts students' motivational persistence. Although the relationship between achievement and motivation or achievement and procrastination has been examined in previous studies, no studies have been found in which the relationship between procrastination tendency, achievement goal orientation and motivational persistence as a whole has been examined. It is thought that this study will contribute to teachers and faculty members in understanding the diversity of behavior in the classroom environment, helping to guide students, preparing course plans, classroom management; and also to the students who are looking for a solution to success by making their personal evaluations.

# **Motivational Persistence**

Motivation is a concept that helps us understand why people behave in certain ways. A student who is motivated to learn attends classes, repeats the information, can relate previous knowledge with new information, and engage in questioning activities. These students do not give up when they face with difficulties, they make an effort. In this sense, motivation increases the probability of students to engage in activities that encourage learning (Schunk, 2007), encourages and sustains their goal-oriented behaviors (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002).

Etymologically, the concept of motivation is quoted from the French word "motivation", which means "motivation, the thing what you put in action". It is derived from the French verb "motiver" (to activate, to encourage) and the verb "motiver" is derived from the word "motif" meaning "impulse". The concept, which has many definitions in the historical process, was seen as a result of instincts in early studies. However, instincts were not sufficient to explain the learning process, different definitions were made by scientists who advocated different approaches in the process. For example, according to the conditioning theory, motivation is defined as responses activated by a stimulus (classical conditioning) or as a response to a stimulus in the presence of a stimulus (operant conditioning). This definition was insufficient to explain motivation in terms of excluding cognitive factors. According to the cognitive consistency theory, motivation arises from the relationship between cognition and behavior. Humanistic theories emphasized cognitive and emotional processes while explaining motivation. In this sense, motivation is necessary to meet basic needs. According to Maslow (1968), needs are in a hierarchical structure. In order to meet the high-level needs, first of all

the lower-level needs must be met. Finally, social cognitive theory, in which learning and motivation are considered as a whole, deals with motivation as a result of goals and expectations. People set goals for themselves and exhibit behaviors they believe will help them achieve those goals. Motivation depends on the belief that the person has the capacity to achieve the desired results from certain behaviors and to learn to do those behaviors. Goals Theory, which adopts the principles of social cognitive theory and offers different perspectives on motivation, was developed to explain and predict students' achievement behaviors. According to the goals theory, it is suggested that there are important relationships between "goals, expectations, actions, skill concepts, orientations related to motivation, social and self-comparisons, and achievement behaviors" (Schunk, 2007).

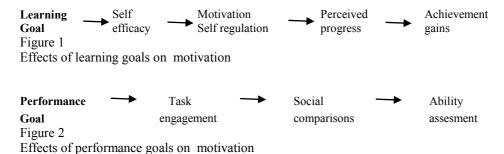
Ensuring regularity in behaviors developed according to goals and expectations requires determination in motivation. Motivational persistence is the type of motivation a person needs in order to be achievementful in his field of activity or to achieve the desired results (Pintrich, 2003). It is defined by Bostan (2015) as "a stable feature of the cognitive system is that the individual continues motivationally in order to find personal resources to overcome the obstacles encountered along the way by making an effort to reach a personal goal".

Motivation processes affect a child's acquisition, transfer and use of knowledge and skills. However, it is very difficult to define the concepts that affect motivation related to the educational process (Dweck, 1986). When studies on motivation and motivational persistence are examined, it is thought that there may be a relationship between motivation and achievement, achievement orientations and academic procrastination (Nugraha, Nugraha & Widyastuti, 2021; Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019; Lee, 2005; Senecal, Koestner, & Vallerand, 1995; Steel, 2007; Tuckman, 1991).

# **Achievement Orientations**

Two types of goals are mentioned in achievement activities: learning goal and performance goal. While the learning goal consists of the knowledge, skills, behaviors and strategies students are trying to gain, the performance goal refers to the types of tasks students should do. A student who sets a learning goal tends to feel self-efficacy to achieve this goal and is motivated to participate in activities related to the goal (Schunk, 2007). Students who adopt the learning goal are eager to develop their knowledge, understanding and competences. These students strive to achieve their goals, are determined, do not give up on obstacles and turn to activities that require effort. Makeing mistakes are a part of the learning process for these students (Ames & Archer, 1991; Dweck, 1986). They try to understand their work and tend to gain a sense of competence based on self-reference standards (Ames, 1992). On the other hand, students tending towards performance goals are afraid of receiving negative feedback about their performance and want more positive feedback (Dweck, 1986). Although social comparisons are very important for these students, they may result in low perception of skills, especially among students who have difficulty in their performance. As a result, students' motivation is negatively affected (Schunk, 2007). Orientation towards learning and performance goals is also defined as learning orientation and performance orientation (Nicholls, Patashnick, Cheung, Thorkildsen, & Lauer, 1989).

While the self-efficacy gained by a learning-oriented student in terms of perceived improvement in skill acquisition and continuous learning during his performance maintains motivation, a performance-oriented student pays attention to completing the performance. Figures 1 and 2 show the effects of learning and performance goals on motivation (Schunk, 2007).



While goal orientation is divided into two as learning and performance orientation, it is also considered as approach or avoidance (Akın & Arslan, 2014). It can be said that a student with a learning approach orientation tries to improve his knowledge and skills, prefers tasks that require effort, and is resistant to problems. It is claimed that a student with a performance approach orientation can avoid activities that will affect his / her performance and will not take risks because he / she focuses on achievement. It is possible for students with learning-avoidance orientation to exhibit perfectionist behaviors and know the blame in themselves when they fail. On the other hand, students with performance avoidance orientation see others as more important than themselves and determine their achievement by comparing them with the achievements of others (Elliot & Church, 1997).

### **Procrastination Tendency**

In the learning process, every student has homework to do and tasks and responsibilities to perform. While some students fulfill all these homework, duties and responsibilities on time, it is observed that some students tend to procrastinate. Procrastination behavior is defined as the individuals not performing a task on time due to poor time management, laziness or lack of motivation (Senecal et al., 1995). Even the negative consequences of individuals are not carrying out a planned study and leaving it for later (Steel, 2007).

Nearly 50% of university students postpone their academic homework in half of their time, and 38% tend to postpone their homework from time to time (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). This rate was found to be 70% (Ellis & Knaus, 1977) among English speaking university students. Another study revealed that 52% of Turkish students have a tendency to academic procrastination (Uzun Özer, Demir, & Ferrari, 2009). The academic procrastination tendency stems from students' inadequate time management and difficulties in being motivated due to their laziness (Senecal et al., 1995). Evaluation anxiety, difficulty in making decisions, rebellion against control, inadequate pursuit of the right, fear of the consequences of achievement, the perception of giving up doing homework, perfectionism, fear of making mistakes, not being motivated, and lack of self-regulated performance are also among the reasons for academic procrastination (Burka and Yuen., 1977; Solomon and Rothblum, 1984; Tuckman, 1998; Tuckman and Sexton, 1989).

Although the concepts of motivation, achievement orientations and procrastination tendencies have been the subject of many studies, there are limited numbers of studies that reveal the relationship between motivational persistence and other variables. In this study, it was aimed to reveal the effect of procrastination tendencies and achievement orientation on the motivational persistence of university students and to examine the relationship between them. For this purpose, is there a relationship between motivational persistence, procrastination and achievement orientation, if so, in what direction; answers were sought to the questions whether procrastination and achievement tendencies predict students' motivational persistence.

#### **METHOD**

In this study, relational survey model was preferred among quantitative research methods. Studies aimed at collecting data to determine certain characteristics of a group are called survey research (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2010). Survey models can be classified into two categories in terms of their types: general survey models and case study survey models. General survey models are screening arrangements made on the sample in order to reach a general conclusion about the universe. Single or relational scans can be made. Research models conducted to determine the occurrences of variables one by one, as type or quantity are called single survey model. Relationship surveys, on the other hand, are models that aim to determine whether there is a change between two or more variables together, and if so, the degree of their relationship. Two types of relationship analysis can be made, such as a correlation-type relationship or a relationship obtained through comparison (Karasar, 2010)

# **Universe and Sample**

University students constitute the universe of the research. A total of 238 university students, 58 males and 180 females, who continue their education in a state university, participated in this study. 53 of them are preschool teachers, 126 are guidance and psychological counseling, and 59 are classroom teacher students. 176 of the students are in 2nd grade and 62 are in 3rd grade.

#### **Data Collection Tools**

The 2 × 2 Achievement Orientation Scale, the Motivational Persistence Scale developed by Constantin, Holman, and Hojbotă (2011) and the Tuckman Academic Procrastination Scale were used as data collection tools in the study.

The 2 × 2 Achievement Goal Orientations Scale, which consists of 26 items, is a four-factor measurement tool. These factors are named as learning-approach orientation, learning-avoidance orientation, performance-approach orientation and performance-avoidance orientation. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale vary between .92 and .97 for the sub-dimensions, and the test-retest reliability coefficients vary between .77 and .86 (Akın, 2006).

The Motivational Persistence Scale, which consists of 13 items, is a three-factor measurement tool. These factors are named as following long-term goals, following current goals, and repeating goals that are not achieved. The scale gives a total motivational persistence score both according to the sub-dimensions. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale were found to be .69 for the whole scale, .72, .70 and .71 for the subscales, and the test-retest correlation coefficient was found as .66 (Sarıçam, Akın, & İlbay, 2013).

Uzun Özer, Saçkes, and Tuckman (2009) adapted the scale developed by Tuckman (1991) to measure academic procrastination tendency into Turkish. The scale consists of 14 items and has a single factor structure. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was found to be .90 and the repetition reliability coefficient of the test as .80. Getting higher scores on the scale means showing a high tendency to procrastinate.

# **Analyzing Data**

The data collected from the students were entered into the SPSS 20 (The Statistical Package for The Social Sciences 20) statistics program. Before the statistical process, kurtosis and skewness values were calculated in order to determine whether the normality assumption was met or not, and the Shapiro-Wilk normality test was applied because it gives more precise measurements. Pearson Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between motivational persistence, achievement orientation and procrastination tendency. In order to see to what extent motivational

persistence and its sub-dimensions are affected by achievement orientation and sub-dimensions and procrastination tendency, Multiple Regression analysis was used.

# 1. Investigation of the Relationship Between Motivational Persistence, Achievement Orientation and Procrastination Tendency

The results of the simple linear correlation analysis (Pearson) performed to determine the relationship between the participants' motivational persistence, achievement orientation and procrastination tendencies and sub-dimensions are shown in Table 1. Dimensions on the table was coded as procrastination tendency: PT; motivational persistence: MP and achievement orientation: AO while sub-dimensions on the table was coded as Learning Approach Achievement Orientation: LAP; Learning Avoidance Achievement Orientation: LAV; Performance Approach Achievement Orientation: PAP; Performance Avoidance Achievement Orientation: PAV; Long-term Purposes Pursuing: LPP; Current Purposes Pursuing: CPP; Recurrence of Unattained Purposes: RUP.

According to the table, between the motivational persistence and the tendency to procrastinate (r: -(0.232) in a negative significant level (p <0.01); A positive and significant relationship (p <0.01) was found between motivational persistence and achievement orientation (r. 0.232). There was no significant relationship (p <0.01) between procrastination tendency and achievement orientation (r: 0.050).

Table 1 Correlation analysis of the relationships between motivational persistence, procrastination tendency, and achievement orientation

Variables	PT	MP	AO	LAP	LAV	PAP	PAV	LPP	CPP	RUP
MP	-,232**	1	,232**	,504**	,261**	,026	-,165*	,883**	,853**	,755**
PT	1	-,232**	,050	-,253**	,063	,040	,317**	-,248**	-,340**	,013
AO	,050	,232**	1	,518**	,712**	,747**	,643**	,192**	,142*	,245**
LAP	-,253**	,504**	,518**	1	,417**	,083	-,126	,493**	,518**	,245**
LAV	,063	,261**	,712**	,417**	1	,237**	,344**	,210**	,166*	,272**
PAP	,040	,026	,747**	,083	,237**	1	,503**	,027	-,042	,084
PAV	,317**	-,165*	,643**	-,126	,344**	,503**	1	-,225**	-,262**	,074
LPP	-,248**	,883**	,192**	,493**	,210**	,027	-,225**	1	,729**	,492**
CPP	-,340**	,853**	,142*	,518**	,166*	-,042	-,262**	,729**	1	,382**
RUP	,013	,755**	,245**	,245**	,272**	,084	,074	,492**	,382**	1
**. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).										

When the sub-dimensions of achievement orientation are examined, the difference between motivational persistence and learning approach achievement orientation (r: .504) is positively significant (p <0.01); Between motivational persistence and learning avoidance achievement orientation (r: 261) at a positively significant level (p <0.01); There is a significant negative correlation (p <0.05) between motivational persistence and performance avoidance achievement orientation (r: -165). There is no relationship between motivational persistence and performance approach achievement orientation.

There is a significant negative correlation (p < 0.01) between the procrastination tendency and pursuing long-term purposes (r: -.248), which is one of the sub-dimensions of motivational persistence. There is a significant positive correlation (p <0.01) between long-term purposes pursuing and achieving goals (r: .192), between long-term purposes pursuing and learning-approach achievement orientation (r: .493); between long-term purposes pursuing and learning avoidance achievement orientation (r. .210).

<sup>\*.</sup> The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There is a significant negative correlation (p <0.01) between long-term purposes pursuing and performance avoidance achievement orientation (r: -.225). No relationship has been found between long-term purposes pursuing and performance approach achievement orientation.

There is a significant negative correlation (p <0.01) between the procrastination tendency and pursuing current purposes (r: -.340), which is one of the sub-dimensions of motivational persistence. There is a positively significant level correlation (p <0.05) between current purposes pursuing and achievement orientation (r: .142); between current purposes pursuing and learning avoidance achievement orientation (r: .166). There is a positively significant level correlation (p <0.01) between current purposes pursuing and learning-approach achievement orientation (.518). In addition, It is seen a significant negative correlation (p <0.01) between current purposes pursuing and performance avoidance (-.262). There is no significant relationship between current purposes pursuing and performance approach achievement orientation (r: -.042).

There is no significant relationship between the procrastination tendency and recurrence of unattained purposes (r: .013), one of the sub-dimensions of motivational persistence. It is seen positively significant level correlation (p <0.01) between recurrence of unattained purposes and achievement orientation (r: .245); between recurrence of unattained purposes and learning approach achievement orientation (r: .245). There is a significant positive correlation (p <0.01) between recurrence of unattained purposes and learning avoidance achievement orientation (r: .272). No relationship is found between both performance approach and performance avoidance achievement orientation and recurrence of unattained purposes.

# 2. Multiple Regression Analysis Results Related to the Prediction of Motivational Stability Variable

The results of the multiple regression analysis regarding the prediction of the motivational persistence variable are given in Table 2. When the table is examined, the variables of procrastination tendency and achievement orientation together give a moderate and significant relationship with the motivational persistence scores of the students (R = 0.336, R2 = 0.113, p < 0.01). The variables of procrastination tendency and achievement orientation explain about 11% of the total variance.

Table 2 Multiple regression analysis for the relationships between motivational persistence achievement orientation and procrastination tendency

Variable		В	Standart Error B	β	T	P	
Constant		3.501	.305	-	11.480	.000	
Procrastination Tendency		295	.074	244	-3.962	.000	
Achievement Orientation		.287	.072	.244	3.974	.000	
R = 0.336,	$R^2 = 0.113$						
F(2, 235) = 15.000,	p = .000						

Dependent Variable: Motivational Persistence

According to the standardized regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ), the relative importance of predictive variables on motivational persistence is procrastination tendency and achievement orientation. When the t-test results regarding the significance of the regression coefficients are examined, it is seen that both variables are significant predictors on motivational persistence.

Table 3
Multiple regression analysis for the relationships between motivational persistence and achievement orientation sub-dimensions and the procrastination tendency

Variable	В	Standart Error B	β	T	P
Constant	2.302	.334	-	6.891	.000
Procrastination Tendency	112	.073	092	-1,524	.129
LAP	.365	.061	.397	5.961	.000
LAV	.102	.048	.145	2.126.	.035
PAP	.028	.045	.041	.625	.533
PAV	121	.057	156	.2.118	.035
$R = 0.535,$ $R^2 = 0.2$ F (5, 232) = 18.594, $p = .000$					

The sub-dimensions of achievement orientation and the variables of procrastination tendency together give a moderate and significant relationship with motivational persistence (R = 0.535, R2 = 0.286, p <01). The aforementioned variables together explain about 29% of the total variance in motivational stability.

According to the standardized regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ), the relative importance order of predictor variables on motivational persistence; learning approach achievement orientation, performance avoidance achievement orientation, learning avoidance achievement orientation, procrastination tendency and performance approach achievement orientation. While the variable that most strongly predicted motivational persistence was learning approach achievement orientation, the variables of procrastination tendency and performance approach achievement orientation did not have a significant effect (p>.01).

# CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between motivational persistence, procrastination tendency and achievement orientation. According to the findings obtained from the study, a significant negative correlation was found between motivational persistence and procrastination tendency. This result coincides with the research in literature (Ferrari, 2001; Haycock, McCarthy, & Skay, 1998; Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009; Lee, 2005; Milgram, Marshecsky & Sadeh, 1995; Senécal et al., 1995; Steel, 2007; Tuckman, 1991). Students with high motivation levels who participate in an activity or enjoy the activity because it is for their own benefit have a lower tendency to procrastinate. On the other hand, students who have no sense of control in the learning process have a high tendency to procrastinate (Lee, 2005). Understanding all aspects of the relationship between motivational persistence and procrastination will make an important contribution to the education and training process. In order to reduce the academic procrastination tendency seen in university students, it will be beneficial for the instructors to be sensitive about the students' goals, expectations, and skills while planning educational activities.

Another result is that students with high motivational persistence to pursue long-term purposes and pursue current purposes have less tendency to procrastinate. Pursuing long-term purposes is psychologically governed by distant, ideal standards. It requires the ability to adhere to high-level, resource-consuming goals that require long-term investment, despite failure or short-term hedonic costs. On the other hand, pursuing current purposes relies on self-control, executive resources. It is common to focus on goals and keep striving in the face of fatigue or stress. In order to achieve goals, there is a behavioral orientation to difficult tasks, with the ability to focus for a long time despite

distraction, frustration, and setbacks, and to maintain constant energy levels (Constantin et al., 2014). While pursuing current purposes is based on the determined pursuit of difficult tasks, pursuing long-term goals is related to the concept of perseverance (Williams & DeSteno, 2008) and endurance (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007). In other words, students who have the characteristics of self-control, focus, orientation towards the difficult, perseverance and resilience have less tendency to procrastinate (Akın & Arslan, 2015; Ekinci, 2019; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996). is achievementful (Dubey, 1982; Henry & Smith, 1994).

Repeating unachievable goals refers to a deliberate and automated process that counteracts the diminished commitment to blocked or suspended efforts. The repetition of cognitions towards unachieved purposes preserves past intentions and there is an active motivational persistence (Constantin et al., 2014). In this study, it was observed that the procrastination tendencies of the students who had the motivational persistence to repeat the unachievable goals were not related to motivation.

The positive relationship between motivational persistence and achievement orientation is clearly seen in students who have learning approach achievement orientation. This relationship is generally positive in achievement orientation and the learning dimension of it, while it is negative in the performance dimension. Learning orientation is to improve ability (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Students with this orientation learn because they want to learn (Pajares & Cheong, 2003); They aim to learn knowledge, behavior, skills, and strategy. Perceived improvement in acquiring skills and the desire to learn continuously ensure the continuation of self-efficacy and motivation (Schunk, 2007). On the other hand, performance orientation is to prove talent and avoid appearing incompetent (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Students with this orientation are concerned with what task they should complete (Schunk, 2007), attach importance to social comparisons, determine their achievement by comparing them with the achievementes of others, try to appear more intelligent and talented, avoid appearing incompetent (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot and Church, 1997; Schunk, 2007). Social comparisons may result in low skill perception for students who have difficulty, in which case motivation is negatively affected (Schunk, 2007).

Based on these results, it can be said that learning orientations should be supported in learning environments and increasing the awareness of faculty members and students about procrastination tendencies and achievement orientations in increasing the level of motivational persistence will contribute to the learning process. This study is limited to university students, likert type scales used, and relational screening. It is important to conduct qualitative and quantitative studies at secondary and primary education level. In this study, which investigated the relationship between motivational persistence and procrastination tendency and achievement orientation, important results were obtained. It is thought that studies that will examine the variables of self-confidence, skill perception, perseverance and achievement as well as procrastination and achievement orientation will contribute to the field.

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