

UNIVERSITY ALIENATION AMONG SPORTS SCIENCE STUDENTS IN  
DISTANCE EDUCATION FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE

*ALIENAÇÃO UNIVERSITÁRIA ENTRE ESTUDANTES DE CIÊNCIAS DO ESPORTE  
NA EDUCAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA APÓS O TERREMOTO*

*ALIENACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA ENTRE ESTUDIANTES DE CIENCIAS DEL  
DEPORTE EN EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA TRAS EL TERREMOTO*



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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to investigate the behaviors of school alienation and the factors influencing them among students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences, in the context of remote learning implemented after the earthquakes of February 6, 2023. A total of 556 volunteer students (174 women and 382 men) enrolled at Usak University participated in the research. The Student Alienation Scale was used to assess students' perceptions of alienation toward the university. Comparative analyses between independent groups revealed statistically significant differences in perceptions of alienation based on variables such as gender, academic program, academic level, and family income ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicate that some variables impact school alienation behaviors, while others show no significant influence. Additionally, school alienation behaviors were increased during the remote learning period adopted after the earthquakes.

**KEYWORDS:** Sports Sciences. Remote Learning. University Alienation.

**RESUMO:** Este estudo tem como objetivo investigar os comportamentos de alienação escolar e os fatores que os influenciam entre estudantes da Faculdade de Ciências do Esporte, no contexto do ensino remoto implementado após os terremotos de 6 de fevereiro de 2023. Participaram da pesquisa 556 estudantes voluntários (174 mulheres e 382 homens) matriculados na Universidade de Usak. Para avaliar as percepções dos estudantes sobre alienação em relação à universidade, foi utilizada a Escala de Alienação Estudantil. As análises comparativas entre grupos independentes revelaram diferenças estatisticamente significativas nas percepções de alienação com base em variáveis como gênero, programa de graduação, nível acadêmico e renda familiar ( $p < 0,05$ ). Os resultados mostram que algumas variáveis têm impacto nos comportamentos de alienação escolar, enquanto outras não apresentam influência significativa. Além disso, observou-se um aumento nos comportamentos de alienação escolar durante o período de ensino remoto adotado após os terremotos.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Ciências do Esporte. Ensino Remoto. Alienação Universitária.

**RESUMEN:** Este estudio tiene como objetivo investigar los comportamientos de alienación escolar y los factores que los influyen entre los estudiantes de la Facultad de Ciencias del Deporte, en el contexto de la enseñanza remota implementada tras los terremotos del 6 de febrero de 2023. Participaron en la investigación 556 estudiantes voluntarios (174 mujeres y 382 hombres) matriculados en la Universidad de Usak. Para evaluar las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre la alienación en relación con la universidad, se utilizó la Escala de Alienación Estudiantil. Los análisis comparativos entre grupos independientes revelaron diferencias estadísticamente significativas en las percepciones de alienación según variables como género, programa de estudios, nivel académico y renta familiar ( $p < 0,05$ ). Los resultados muestran que algunas variables impactan los comportamientos de alienación escolar, mientras que otras no presentan una influencia significativa. Además, se observó un aumento en los comportamientos de alienación escolar durante el período de enseñanza remota adoptado tras los terremotos.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Ciencias del Deporte. Enseñanza Remota. Alienación Universitaria.

## Introduction

On February 6, 2023, two earthquakes with magnitudes of 7.7 and 7.6 hit the Pazarcık and Elbistan districts of Kahramanmaraş province in Turkey. Known as the catastrophe of the century, these quakes resulted in the loss of 50,000 lives and left 130,000 people injured. The impact was widely felt across a vast region, including Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Diyarbakır, Adana, Şanlıurfa, Osmaniye, Kilis and Malatya. The destruction was widespread, with around 40,000 structures destroyed and more than 300,000 buildings declared unfit for occupation. Approximately 2.5 million people were left homeless, and around 5 million were displaced. It is estimated that 15 million people directly suffered the consequences of these events, which generated an economic cost of 110 billion dollars. As well as affecting 11 provinces in Turkey, the earthquakes were felt over a wider geographical area, covering Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Iran and Cyprus. These events have become landmarks among major disasters, causing significant social, psychological, political, economic, demographic, administrative, and geological impacts (Arslan, 2023).

The earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş have negatively affected the education sector, impacting primary and secondary schools, as well as higher education institutions. In response, a two-week extension was granted to the half-year recess before the start of the second academic semester of 2022-2023 throughout Turkey. Classes resumed in 71 provinces outside the affected area on February 20, 2023. In the 10 provinces affected, the return to educational activities was organized into three categories, based on the extent of the damage.

In these places, the return to classes was planned, taking into account the structural integrity of the school buildings, managed by the district and school. For example, in the first category, which included Diyarbakır, Kilis, and Şanlıurfa, classes started on March 1. However, in Adana, also in this category, the reopening was postponed until March 13 due to local conditions. In Gaziantep and Osmaniye, which belong to the second category, classes also resumed on March 13. Finally, in the third category, made up of Adıyaman, Malatya, Kahramanmaraş, and Hatay, school activities were scheduled to restart on March 27.

Meanwhile, the Higher Education Council (YÖK) announced that universities could start the semester with remote teaching from February 20, with the possibility of adopting a hybrid model combining face-to-face classes from April. In a statement issued on March 30, the YÖK authorized the return to face-to-face classes at universities from April 3, on an optional basis and combined with remote teaching, without compulsory attendance (Yağız, 2023). However, especially in undergraduate courses with a high load of practical subjects, such as those at the

Faculty of Sports Sciences, remote teaching has presented challenges, such as difficulties in effective communication and support for students with limited self-learning skills. These problems can alienate students from the university.

Alienation, in this context, is characterized as a state of disconnection in interpersonal relationships, manifested by distrust of others, powerlessness, lack of meaning, absence of norms, and isolation. It is a condition derived from individual experiences related to social problems, often leading to disconnection from oneself and the cultural environment (Case, 2008). In contemporary industrial societies, alienation is a concept that affects various institutions and human relationships, and education is particularly susceptible. In the educational field, it represents a significant challenge, mainly affecting students. When detached from the educational environment, the learning process loses meaning, resulting in decreased enthusiasm for learning. In addition, educational alienation can provoke feelings of exclusion and discrimination among students, reinforcing the perception of disconnection from the university environment (Eryılmaz; Burgaz, 2011).

The phenomenon of alienation often emerges from a sense of restriction imposed on students by the existing structure. This feeling of inadequacy in dealing with external forces, whether natural elements or social constructs such as norms, rules, and trends, combined with a lack of opportunities to develop specific skills, can result in an intense feeling of inhibition. Students who experience this inhibition often manifest a range of negative emotions, such as jealousy, anger, anxiety, insecurity, fear, and resentment, directed at themselves or society in general (Case, 2008).

According to Thomas and Smith (2004), one of the main factors contributing to student alienation is the detour of students' energy towards the goals of the educational system, often to the detriment of their natural talents and inclinations. This limits the student's ability to achieve self-realization, hindering the development of positive characteristics and promoting disconnection from their true essence. Individuals who experience alienation face significant challenges in understanding and managing themselves, experiencing a frequent sense of powerlessness. Moreover, this situation can lead to adverse results, such as burnout and disengagement from the educational process (Case, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, the introduction of distance learning after the earthquakes may have contributed to increasing the sense of alienation among students at the Faculty of Sports Sciences. Such alienation can have a detrimental impact on the academic performance of many students, with some possibly dropping out. In order to meet these challenges, it is essential to

assess the level of alienation perceived by students at this college, identify the factors that influence this perception, and implement appropriate interventions. Therefore, this study aims to measure the degree of perceived alienation and identify the associated factors among students at the Faculty of Sports Sciences at the University of Usak.

## Materials and Methods

The Student Alienation Scale was used to measure the participants' perception of alienation. This cross-sectional, analytical study collected data by applying the scale online after approval from the University of Usak's Committee for Ethics in Scientific Research and Publication in the Social Sciences and Humanities, granted on April 12, 2023, under reference number 2023-79. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

## Participants

The study included 556 student volunteers (174 women and 382 men), aged between 18 and 29 (mean =  $21.82 \pm 1.87$ ), all enrolled at the Faculty of Sports Sciences at the University of Usak.

## Data Collection and Analysis

### Alienation Scale for Students

The Alienation Scale for Students, improved by Çağlar (2012), is made up of four sub-dimensions: powerlessness (items 2, 6, 8, 9, 16 and 20), irregularity (items 10, 13, 17, 18 and 19), isolation (items 1, 5, 7, 11 and 12) and lack of meaning (items 3, 4, 14 and 15), totaling 20 items. It should be noted that seven items on the scale (items 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 16 and 20) have reverse scores. The scale shows internal consistency, with coefficients of 0.79 for the first sub-dimension, 0.75 for the second, 0.76 for the third, 0.76 for the fourth, and an overall coefficient of 0.86. Of the 20 items, 13 contain statements indicating the presence of alienation, while the remaining 7 address the absence of alienation. The scale uses a five-point response format, ranging from "(1) Strongly disagree" to "(5) Strongly agree". The maximum possible score is 100, and the minimum is 20.

Item scores are categorized as follows: (1.00-1.79) indicates a very low level of alienation, (1.80-2.59) a low level, (2.60-3.40) a medium level, (3.41-4.21) a high level and (4.22-5.00) a very high level of alienation. For the total scale, the score ranges are: (20-35) for very low level of alienation, (36-51) for low level, (52-67) for medium level, (68-83) for high level, and (84-100) for very high level of alienation.

### **Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS 25.0 software, with a 95% confidence interval. As the number of observations exceeded 70, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to verify the normality of the data distribution. As the data showed a normal distribution and met the assumptions for parametric tests, parametric statistical methods were applied for the subsequent analyses.

Frequency distributions were calculated for variables related to the student's gender, degree program, level of schooling, family income, parents' level of schooling, satisfaction with distance education, and where the students were located during the earthquake.

The T-test for Independent Samples was applied to determine the significance of the differences between the means of two independent samples in continuous variables. To compare the means of three or more independent groups, One-Way ANOVA was used, which belongs to the family of Independent Samples Tests. Post-hoc tests, specifically the Tukey HSD test, were carried out for multiple comparisons between groups in order to identify differences between three or more independent groups, considering the homogeneity of the variances.

## Results

**Table 1** - Frequency distributions for students' level of alienation from the university

Level of alienation from the university	n	%
Very low	47	8.5
Bass	227	40.8
Moderate	226	40.6
High	44	7.9
Very high	12	2.2

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 1 shows the frequency distributions of the students' levels of alienation from the university. The data set includes 556 observations for all variables. Of these, 8.5% (n=47) showed a very low level of alienation, 40.8% (n=227) a low level, 40.6% (n=226) a moderate level, 7.9% (n=44) a high level and 2.2% (n=12) a very high level of alienation.

**Table 2** - Comparison of alienation from university based on gender

Variables	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	S <sub>erro</sub>	T-test	
						t	p
Impotence	Female	174	15.33	5.03	0.38	-0.893	0.372
	Male	382	15.77	5.43	0.27		
Unruliness	Female	174	12.61	4.04	0.30	-2.622	0.009*
	Male	382	13.60	4.16	0.21		
Isolation	Female	174	12.97	4.04	0.30	-0.179	0.858
	Male	382	13.03	4.02	0.20		
Lack of meaning	Female	174	9.95	3.30	0.25	-2.960	0.003*
	Female	382	10.97	3.93	0.20		
Alienation of the university	Male	174	50.86	12.24	0.92	-2.248	0.025*
	Female	382	53.37	12.14	0.62		

Source: Prepared by the authors; \*p<0.05.

Table 2 reveals a statistically significant difference between male and female students in terms of levels of alienation from the university and its sub-dimensions, specifically lack of rules and meaning (p<0.05). When analyzing the mean values, it can be seen that male students have higher perceptions of unruliness, meaninglessness, and general alienation from university compared to female students.

**Table 3** - Comparison of the level of alienation from the university based on the degree program attended

Variables	Degree program	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Impotence	1 PES teaching	165	14.49	4.84	5.982	0.001*	1 (3)
	2 Sports Management	192	15.41	5.28			
	3 Coaching Training	174	16.75	5.55			
	4 Recreation	25	17.08	5.19			
	5 Total	556	15.63	5.31			
Unruliness	1 PES teaching	165	12.41	3.98	4.052	0.007*	1 (3)
	2 Sports Management	192	13.48	3.87			
	3 Coaching Training	174	13.93	4.41			
	4 Recreation	25	13.24	4.67			
	5 Total	556	13.29	4.15			
Isolation	1 PES teaching	165	12.25	3.79	3.075	0.027*	1 (2)
	2 Sports Management	192	13.43	4.13			
	3 Coaching Training	174	13.31	4.15			
	4 Recreation	25	12.72	3.04			
	5 Total	556	13.01	4.02			
Lack of meaning	1 PES teaching	165	9.60	3.48	8.478	0.000*	1 (2)
	2 Sports Management	192	11.27	3.62			
	3 Coaching Training	174	11.16	4.01			
	4 Recreation	25	9.28	3.41			
	5 Total	556	10.65	3.77			
Alienation of the university	1 PES teaching	165	48.75	11.70	8.760	0.000*	1 (2)
	2 Sports Management	192	53.59	11.39			
	3 Coaching Training	174	55.14	12.79			
	4 Recreation	25	52.32	12.13			
	5 Total	556	52.58	12.22			

Source: Prepared by the authors. \* $p < 0.05$ ; PES: Physical Education and Sports.

Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the students in terms of their alienation from the university and its sub-dimensions of powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, and meaninglessness, based on the degree program attended ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of the multiple comparisons indicate that students from the Department of Physical Education and Sports have the lowest levels of perceived powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, meaninglessness, and general alienation from the university.



**Table 4 - Comparison of alienation from university based on level of education**

Variables	Level of education	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Impotence	1 1st grade	131	15.42	5.36	1.664	0.174	
	2 2nd grade	82	15.04	4.94			
	3 3rd grade	143	16.45	5.49			
	4 4th grade	200	15.43	5.26			
	5 Total	556	15.63	5.31			
Unruliness	1 1st grade	131	12.39	3.98	4.460	0.004*	
	2 2nd grade	82	12.65	4.33			
	3 3rd grade	143	13.86	4.11			
	4 4th grade	200	13.74	4.10			
	5 Total	556	13.29	4.15			
Isolation	1 1st grade	131	12.55	3.69	5.883	0.001*	1 (4)
	2 2nd grade	82	11.67	3.54			
	3 3rd grade	143	13.23	4.19			
	4 4th grade	200	13.71	4.14			
	5 Total	556	13.01	4.02			
Lack of meaning	1 1st grade	131	9.64	3.63	8.566	0.000*	1 (3)
	2 2nd grade	82	9.78	3.32			
	3 3rd grade	143	10.87	4.18			
	4 4th grade	200	11.52	3.51			
	5 Total	556	10.65	3.77			
Alienation of the university	1 1st grade	131	50.00	11.69	6.844	0.000*	1 (3)
	2 2nd grade	82	49.13	11.72			
	3 3rd grade	143	54.41	12.47			
	4 4th grade	200	54.38	12.05			
	5 Total	556	52.58	12.22			

Source: Prepared by the authors; \* $p < 0.05$ .

Table 4 reveals a significant difference between the students in terms of their alienation from the university and its sub-dimensions, such as unruliness, isolation, and lack of meaning, according to their level of education ( $p < 0.05$ ). The multiple comparisons made between the groups show that the perception of unruliness, isolation, lack of meaning, and general alienation is more pronounced among 3rd and 4th-year students compared to 1st and 2nd-year students.

**Table 5 - Comparison of the level of alienation from university based on family income**

Variables	Family income	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
Impotence	1 Income is lower than expenses	174	17.06	5.28	9.879	0.000*	1 (2)
	2 Income equals expenditure	318	14.87	4.95			
	3 Income exceeds expenses	64	15.50	6.31			
	4 Total	556	15.63	5.31			
Unruliness	1 Income is lower than expenses	174	14.07	4.19	4.869	0.008*	1 (2)
	2 Income equals expenditure	318	12.86	3.96			
	3 Income exceeds expenses	64	13.28	4.67			
	4 Total	556	13.29	4.15			
Isolation	1 Income is lower than expenses	174	13.81	4.12	5.126	0.006*	1 (2)
	2 Income equals expenditure	318	12.68	3.95			1 (3)
	3 Income exceeds expenses	64	12.50	3.81			
	4 Total	556	13.01	4.02			
Lack of meaning	1 Income is lower than expenses	174	11.43	3.90	5.423	0.005*	1 (2)
	2 Income equals expenditure	318	10.29	3.58			
	3 Income exceeds expenses	64	10.36	4.06			
	4 Total	556	10.65	3.77			
Alienation of the university	1 Income is lower than expenses	174	56.37	12.45	12.860	0.000*	1 (2)
	2 Income equals expenditure	318	50.70	11.41			1 (3)
	3 Income exceeds expenses	64	51.64	13.28			
	4 Total	556	52.58	12.22			

Source: Prepared by the authors; \*p<0.05.

Table 5 shows a statistically significant difference between the students in relation to alienation from the university and its sub-dimensions (p<0.05). Based on these results, it can be concluded that students from families with insufficient income to cover their expenses tend to have higher perceptions of powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, lack of meaning, and general alienation from the university.

**Table 6** - Comparison of the level of alienation in relation to university based on the mother's level of schooling

Variables	Mother's level of education	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p
Impotence	1 Elementary school	319	16.04	5.13	2.163	0.091
	2 Middle school	107	14.90	5.25		
	3 High school	93	14.84	5.11		
	4 University	37	16.19	6.96		
	5 Total	556	15.63	5.31		
Unruliness	1 Elementary school	319	13.40	4.17	0.844	0.470
	2 Middle school	107	12.83	4.01		
	3 High school	93	13.61	4.36		
	4 University	37	12.84	3.78		
	5 Total	556	13.29	4.15		
Isolation	1 Elementary school	319	13.09	4.02	1.568	0.196
	2 Middle school	107	13.34	4.10		
	3 High school	93	12.87	4.12		
	4 University	37	11.73	3.37		
	5 Total	556	13.01	4.02		
Lack of meaning	1 Elementary school	319	10.74	3.81	2.810	0.039
	2 Middle school	107	10.25	3.51		
	3 High school	93	11.30	3.78		
	4 University	37	9.38	3.89		
	5 Total	556	10.65	3.77		
Alienation of the university	1 Elementary school	319	53.28	12.35	1.233	0.300
	2 Middle school	107	51.32	11.94		
	3 High school	93	52.62	12.05		
	4 University	37	50.14	12.22		
	5 Total	556	52.58	12.22		

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 6 shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the students in relation to alienation from the university and its sub-dimensions, when considering the mother's level of education ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, the mother's level of education does not influence the perception of powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, lack of meaning, and general alienation from university among students.

**Table 7** - Comparison of the level of alienation in relation to university based on the father's level of schooling

Variables	Father's level of education	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p
Impotence	1 Elementary school	206	16.19	5.29	1.426	0.234
	2 Secondary school	138	15.40	5.03		
	3 High school	138	15.43	5.33		
	4 University	74	14.88	5.76		
	5 Total	556	15.63	5.31		
Unruliness	1 Elementary school	206	13.67	4.35	1.698	0.166
	2 Secondary school	138	12.67	3.96		
	3 High school	138	13.43	3.91		
	4 University	74	13.11	4.27		
	5 Total	556	13.29	4.15		
Isolation	1 Elementary school	206	12.89	4.13	1.801	0.146
	2 Secondary school	138	13.43	3.75		
	3 High school	138	13.23	4.11		
	4 University	74	12.16	3.95		
	5 Total	556	13.01	4.02		
Lack of meaning	1 Elementary school	206	10.88	3.83	1.000	0.393
	2 Secondary school	138	10.38	3.50		
	3 High school	138	10.84	3.99		
	4 University	74	10.18	3.66		
	5 Total	556	10.65	3.77		
Alienation of the university	1 Elementary school	206	53.63	12.51	1.543	0.202
	2 Secondary school	138	51.88	11.59		
	3 High school	138	52.93	12.54		
	4 University	74	50.32	11.78		
	5 Total	556	52.58	12.22		

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 7 shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the students in relation to alienation from university and its sub-dimensions, such as powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, and lack of meaning, based on the father's level of education ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, it can be concluded that the father's level of education does not affect the perception of powerlessness, dereliction, isolation, lack of meaning, and general alienation from university among students.

## Discussion

Factors contributing to students' alienation from the university include the perception that the curriculum is not relevant to everyday life, the bureaucratic nature of educational institutions, demotivating learning experiences, excessive subject loads, undemocratic administrative structures, insufficient emphasis on pleasurable experiences, and externally imposed teaching methods (Sidorkin, 2004). Previous research has approached student

alienation from multidimensional perspectives, encompassing institutional, programmatic, and socio-cultural dimensions (Huffman, 2001; Brown; Higgins; Pualsen, 2003).

In the present study, which evaluates the potential alienation resulting from the transition to distance education after the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, a significant proportion of students showed low (n=227; 40.8%) to moderate (n=226; 40.6%) levels of alienation. Factors such as the convenience of accessing distance education from different locations, financial benefits for students, intuitive learning platforms, and efficient assessment methods can contribute to reducing feelings of alienation among some students.

On the other hand, it is postulated that factors such as the difficulty in promoting direct face-to-face interactions, which are essential in traditional learning environments, the lack of ample opportunities for socialization, technological deficiencies, technical failures, high costs associated with hardware and internet infrastructure, and insufficient engagement with practical components of courses can result in a moderate perception of alienation among students in relation to the university.

Şimşek and Akdemir (2015) assessed levels of alienation among undergraduate students from various programs and observed that the sense of alienation towards the university was moderate. Similarly, Çelik and Babaoğlu (2017), in their study with students from Yozgat Bozok University, identified a moderate level of alienation across four subdomains: powerlessness, normlessness, isolation, and meaninglessness. Likewise, Çağlar's (2013) research revealed a correlation between levels of alienation and attitudes towards the teaching profession, concluding that perceptions of alienation in relation to the university were moderate. Furthermore, the study by Özaydınlık *et al.* (2016) with prospective university students also reported a moderate perception of alienation.

Individual traits, expectations, beliefs, and values play an essential role in the development of perceptions of alienation. Personal characteristics such as age, gender, and length of service influence this perception. This study revealed that gender, in particular, has a significant influence: male students showed more intense feelings in the sub-dimensions of unruliness and meaninglessness compared to female students. Therefore, it was possible to see that the women readily adjusted to remote learning, while the men faced difficulties, which may have contributed to a greater sense of alienation among them.

This conclusion is corroborated by Şimşek and Akdemir (2015), who identified higher levels of alienation in general and in specific dimensions, such as meaninglessness, powerlessness, and social distance, among male university students compared to females. Ayık

and Ataş Akdemir (2013) also observed that male trainee teachers felt more disconnected from the university than their female colleagues. Similar findings emerge at different educational levels: Williamson and Cullingford (1998) found that men were more prone to school alienation in a study of 270 American high school students. Lane and Daugherty (1999) also found a greater perception of alienation among male students at this level of education. Similarly, Arastaman (2006) concluded that female high school students showed greater school engagement than male students, and Uzun (2006) found that male students in the fifth year of elementary school felt more disconnected than female students, especially in dimensions such as powerlessness, unruliness, and social isolation.

In addition, this study found that students with a degree in Physical Education and Sports showed less disconnection with the university than students from other courses. The best-placed students are enrolled in this course at the Faculty of Sports Sciences at the University of Uşak, where admission is by central placement exam. As these students tend to perform better academically, it is plausible that they experience less alienation. The affinity for the course, added to the advantages and opportunities on offer, contributes to a more positive outlook. On the other hand, programs with a high number of subjects can generate pressure, increasing anxiety and encouraging alienation behaviors.

The student's academic level also influences their perception of alienation. The study identified that 3rd and 4th-year students felt more alienated from the university, particularly in the sub-dimensions of unruliness, isolation, and lack of meaning, compared to 1st and 2nd-year students. Negative experiences, mental fatigue, and the pressure of the National Selection Examination for Public Servants (KPSS) - faced especially by fourth-year students - are factors that can reduce commitment to the university. As academic achievement progresses, family and social expectations increase, triggering anxiety and contributing to distancing from school. As graduation approaches, worries about the future exacerbate this situation (Çağlar, 2013; Gedik; Cömert, 2018; Polat, 2018).

Students' behaviors, thoughts, and perceptions can be influenced by their level of family income. Students from high-income families sometimes feel disconnected from school, interpreting their financial status as a security factor. On the other hand, those from low-income families can experience alienation due to the lack of material and emotional support. This study revealed that students whose family income is not sufficient to cover their expenses have more pronounced perceptions of school alienation, especially in the dimensions of powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, and lack of meaning. While individuals from wealthy families may show

greater attachment to school because of the opportunities they enjoy, low-income students face alienation due to family stress, neglect, and a lack of adequate educational resources.

Uzun (2006) observed greater alienation in students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, while Çelik (2005) found greater disengagement among high-income students. Some studies, however, have not detected significant differences in the dimensions of powerlessness, unruliness, isolation, and meaninglessness between students from different family income levels (Coşkun and Altay, 2009; Çelik and Babaoğlu, 2017). Bellini (2015) found that students from economically stable families were more attached to a school than those from disadvantaged families. Osterman (2000) also reported that children from families with a higher socioeconomic status tend to be more engaged in school, while another study revealed greater school engagement among students from low-income families.

Parents' educational level can also impact behaviors related to school alienation, although this effect is not always noticeable due to the student's individual characteristics. In some cases, the educational level of the parents may have limited or no impact. A student who enjoys the school environment gets on well with classmates and teachers, and receives adequate educational support from the institution can develop a greater attachment to school, regardless of their parent's level of education.

The analysis of the educational background of the parents of the students in the sample revealed that few had a university degree; the majority had elementary, middle, or high school diplomas. The limited variation in parents' educational levels may explain the lack of significant differences in students' perceptions of alienation. However, students with parents who had graduated from higher education had lower alienation scores, corroborating the observation that higher levels of parental education are associated with a more incredible school bond and a reduction in perceptions of alienation, as pointed out in the literature (Bellici, 2015).

This study also identified that 44.8% of students were dissatisfied with the distance education process implemented after the earthquake, while 34.9% expressed satisfaction and 20.3% remained undecided. Satisfaction or ambivalence towards distance learning showed similar influences on feelings of alienation towards the university. The average indicators of alienation were moderate in all groups: satisfied, dissatisfied, and undecided. Students who value distance education may experience a feeling of disengagement due to the lack of obligation to attend in person, the flexibility in attendance rules, the convenience of accessing classes remotely, the reduction in financial costs, and the lack of standardized tests. On the other hand, dissatisfied students associated their feelings of alienation with the perception of a drop

in educational quality. Undecided students, on the other hand, had feelings of alienation influenced by both the positive and negative perceptions of the quality of teaching. Thus, regardless of their attitude towards distance learning, all the groups had a moderate perception of alienation from the university.

Before the study, it was expected that students living in the earthquake zone or with close relatives in the area would show higher levels of alienation. However, the results showed no significant differences in these feelings based on the location of the students during the event. This suggests that, considering the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning, the perception of alienation from the university remains consistent at a moderate level, regardless of the place of residence during the earthquake.

### **Final considerations**

The study concluded that factors such as gender, degree program, academic level, and family income influence school alienation behaviors. In addition, the transition to distance education after the earthquake raised perceptions of university alienation, albeit at low to moderate levels. With a return to traditional education, the study recommends measures such as: individualizing teaching activities; diversifying teaching methods; including group activities; a diversity of teaching materials; improving the quality of the school and classroom environment; organizing physical spaces that meet students' expectations, promoting a democratic atmosphere; encouraging participation in intra- and extracurricular activities; promoting extracurricular social activities; and offering psychological support to students, especially those directly affected by the earthquake. These actions can improve academic performance and reduce undesirable behavior, such as dropping out of the course.



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