



## The Mediating Role of Patience in the Relationship Between Coping Styles and Resilience

### Başa Çıkma Tarzları ve Psikolojik Sağlamlık İlişkisinde Sabrın Aracılık Rolü

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**ABSTRACT**: The aim of the present study was to examine the mediation effect of patience in the relationship between coping styles and resilience in university students. The sample comprised 401 university students (290 females [72.3%] and 111 males [27.7%]). The Patience Scale, Coping Style Scale, and Brief Resilience Scale were employed in the study. SPSS and AMOS 21 were used for statistical analysis. According to the study findings, there were positive relationships between patience, resilience, and problem-focused coping styles. Emotion-focused coping styles were negatively associated with patience and resilience. The results of the mediating model showed that patience partially mediated the relationships between problem/emotion-focused coping styles and resilience. The researchers discussed the results and offered suggestions in light of the relevant literature.

**Keywords**: Coping styles, resilience, patience, mediation analysis

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**ÖZ:** Bu araştırmanın amacı, üniversite öğrencilerinde stresle baş çıkma tarzları ile psikolojik sağlamlık arasındaki ilişkide sabrın aracılık etkisini incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemi 401 üniversite öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır (290 kadın [%72,3] ve 111 erkek [%27,7]). Araştırmada Sabır Ölçeği, Stresle Başa Çıkma Tarzları Ölçeği ve Kısa Psikolojik Sağlamlık Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. İstatistiksel analizler için SPSS ve AMOS 21 programları kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre sabır, psikolojik sağlamlık ve problem odaklı başa çıkma tarzları arasında pozitif yönde ilişkiler bulunmuştur. Duygu odaklı başa çıkma tarzları ise sabır ve psikolojik sağlamlık ile negatif yönde ilişkili bulunmuştur. Aracılık modelinin sonuçları göre, problem/duygu odaklı başa çıkma tarzları ile psikolojik sağlamlık arasındaki ilişkilerde sabrın kısmi aracılık etkisinin olduğunu belirlenmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar ilgili alanyazın ışığında tartışılmaya çalışılmış ve öneriler sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Başa çıkma tarzları, psikolojik sağlamlık, sabır, aracılık analizi.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

No matter what developmental stage we are in, stressful life events that we are likely to experience seem to be an unavoidable part of our existence. The years of university education, which corresponds to the early adulthood period, can cause many stressful situations for young people. Reactions to these stressful situations and personality traits are crucial factors in determining individuals' psychological health. In this context, stress emerges as a concept that researchers have focused on for a long time and they have conducted many studies on it. Stress is a person's unique response to circumstances that arise from their physical and social environment and cause their harmony to deteriorate (Cüceloğlu, 2002). Stress was first defined by Selye (1956) as "nonspecific response of the body to any demand". According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress is a state of physical and psychological overstimulation in which a person has trouble adjusting to changes brought on by themselves or their surroundings and believes that this is a risky scenario for them. Examining the definitions in the relevant literature reveals that, despite the fact that stress is frequently viewed in a negative light, it can actually motivate a person to cope with problems in their life. Alternatively, negative stress can cause anxiety, pessimism, anger, tension, and forgetfulness, among other problems in the short term (Baltaş and Baltaş, 2002; McEwen, 2006). In the long term, it can cause physiological, emotional, and mental problems, such as depression, anxiety and sleep disorders, headaches, and hypertension (Baltaş and Baltaş, 2002). At this point, it is observed that individuals' coping styles and resilience levels help protect their physical and mental health and well-being.

The styles of coping with stress, which is one of the variables discussed within the scope of the research, are emotional, intellectual, and behavioral reactions that an individual shows to meet their internal or environmental expectations and needs when they think that personal resources are insufficient (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). On examining the relevant literature, one can observe that there are many studies on the styles of coping with stress and there are different models of coping with stress. This study will use the approach of coping with stress proposed by Folkman and Lazarus (1985) as a basis. This model divides coping styles into two main headings: problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping includes strategies, such as information gathering, planning, problem-solving, resolving interpersonal conflicts, goal setting, time management, advice, and decision-making, to reduce the effects of stressful events (Türküm, 1999). In emotion-focused coping, instead of strategies to change the current situation, people use strategies to reduce emotional reactions caused by stressors. These strategies include methods such as avoidance, blaming oneself or others, daydreaming, attempting to find humor in events, etc. (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980). Additionally, other than problem-focused and emotion-focused coping styles, researchers identified five styles of coping with stress, namely, self-confident approach, optimistic approach, seeking social support, submissive approach, and helpless approach. From these dimensions, researchers state that the self-confident approach, seeking social support, and the optimistic approach are problem-focused coping; the helpless approach and the submissive approach are emotion-focused coping styles (Şahin and Durak, 1995). On examining the relevant literature it became clear that the styles of coping with stress have been the subject of numerous different studies and are related to a wide variety of variables. Problem-focused coping has a positive relation with variables, such as emotional intelligence (Por et al., 2011), self-esteem (Hamarta et al. 2009), psychological well-being (Wang et al. 2022), anger control (Arslan, 2010), resilience (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019), self-compassion (Aşkan, 2020), and quality of life (Dağlar et al., 2019), whereas, emotion-focused coping has a positive relation with variables, such as depression (Mahmoud et al., 2012; Aşkan, 2020), anxiety (Mahmoud et al., 2012), smoking (Naquin and Gilbert, 1996), intolerance to uncertainty (Coşkun, 2019), and emotional instability and aggression (Carlo et al, 2012). From the cited

research examples, it can be inferred that there are many variables related to the styles of coping with stress. However, the concept of patience, which is assumed to be a psychological process and a skill that is effective in our responses to stressful situations, emerges as another variable discussed in research. Negative situations encountered by us in our daily lives lead to many negative emotions, and we are expected to have patience while dealing with these situations. The concept of patience, which we often use in our daily lives, has many different definitions. Patience in Turkish implies “the virtue of waiting for sad situations such as pain, poverty, and injustice to pass without rebelling and with endurance” (Turkish Language Institution [TLI], 2022). Schnitker (2012) defined patience as an individual’s tendency to wait calmly in the face of pain, distress, and disappointment. According to Doğan (2016), patience has emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects; it is a psychological process that involves perseverance, overcoming challenges and obstacles, and waiting to see the results. Additionally, patience is expressed as one of the basic skills required for the development of mindfulness skills (Eliüşük, 2014). Therefore, being patient is appreciating each moment as it arrives and understanding that everything takes time to develop (Kabat-Zinn, 2009). According to this approach, every situation needs to wait for the right time to develop.

The concept of patience, which we frequently encounter in our daily lives, emerges in the literature as a concept that is dealt with within the context of positive psychology (Doğan, 2016). Positive psychology is an approach that focuses on issues of individuals strengthening themselves, improving their lives and exploring what is positive for an individual (Peterson, 2000). The manner of dealing with an individual is not by focusing on the individual’s weaknesses and discomfort, but rather through the coherent human model, focusing on improving the individual’s quality of life and well-being (Demir and Türk, 2020). Peterson and Seligman (2004) discussed the concept of patience together with the positive psychology approach that focuses on self-empowerment and evaluated patience as a component of perseverance, self-regulation, and open-mindedness. Researchers also state that patience is related to resilience, which is one of the important concepts of the positive psychology approach (Soroush et al., 2021; Ulukan and Ulukan, 2021). Connor and Davidson (2003) emphasized that patience should be considered while determining the resilience levels of individuals by stating that patience is one of the important concepts of the positive psychology approach, which is among the individual characteristics that affect resilience. In a study conducted by Ursano et al. (1986) that focused on prisoners of war, the researchers identified that individuals who claimed to have benefited from captivity reported that they were more optimistic, patient, valued interpersonal communication, and had greater insight. Parallel to this information, the ability to withstand challenging life events can be related to the effects that these events may create on individuals.

We often consider patience in terms of temporal, situational, and behavioral dimensions. Schnitker (2012) suggested that patience can be investigated in three groups: daily hassles patience, life hardship patience, and interpersonal patience. Similarly, Mehrabian (1999) discussed patience under three headings: short-term patience, which we use in situations that we frequently encounter in daily life, such as waiting in queue and traffic jams; long-term patience, which is the ability to cope with challenging situations, such as illnesses and economic problems; and interpersonal patience, which we use for people, such as our parents, friends, and spouses, during social interactions. Within the scope of this research, we discuss the concept of patience in the three areas proposed by Schnitker (2012).

By examining the relevant literature, researchers determined that patience has a significant positive correlation with personal traits, such as psychological well-being (Schnitker and Emmons, 2007), resilience (Soroush et al., 2021), problem-solving (Özdemir, 2018), emotion regulation (Eliüşük,

2014), self-compassion (Blount and Janicik, 2000; Eliüşük, 2014), life satisfaction (Aghababaei and Tabik, 2015), cognitive flexibility (Gökçen et al., 2020), perceived social support and self-esteem (Koç and Arslan (2019), extraversion, openness to experience, complaisance, and responsibility (Akyol, 2019). Studies have also shown that patience has a negative relation with concepts, such as aggression (Eliöz et al., 2019), difficulty in emotion regulation (Gökçen et al., 2020), emotional instability/neuroticism (Akyol, 2019), burnout (Tangünü, 2020), and depression and anxiety (Aghababaei and Tabik, 2015). In the context of the relevant literature, researchers concluded that the concept of patience is examined with different elements in terms of personal and interpersonal dimensions.

In this context, the last concept considered within the scope of the study as one of the personal variables is resilience. This concept is derived from the Latin root word “resilire,” which implies to be flexible, to be able to return to its old form easily (Greene and Conrad, 2002). The definition of the word “resilience” —which is the English form of the concept of resilience—in the dictionary is “the quick recovery of the person or things after any sudden event, bad event, or difficulty” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries, 2022). Resilience, which is accepted as one of the most important concepts of the positive psychology approach, basically implies the ability of an individual to maintain or regain their psychological health despite the difficulties experienced (Wald et al., 2006). Research states that individuals who can quickly establish a balance in interpersonal relationships and continue their daily lives following physical and psychological difficulties or stressful life events have high psychological resistance (Zautra et al., 2010). According to another definition, resilience is “the ability of an individual to recover, recuperate, return to their former functionality, and adapt again” (Smith et al. 2008).

By examining the relevant literature, researchers determined that resilience in university students has been the subject of numerous different studies and is related to a wide variety of concepts. Researchers determined that resilience has relations with many concepts, such as emotional intelligence (Magnano et al. 2016), social support and well-being (Malkoç and Yalçın, 2015; Mayordomo et al. 2016), coping strategies (Mayordomo et al. 2016), self-efficacy and happiness (Can and Cantez, 2018), burnout (Zou et al., 2016), self-compassion (Ruiz-Fernandez et al. 2021), life satisfaction (Shi et al., 2015), mindfulness (Pidgeon and Keye, 2014), and psychological distress (Bacchi and Licinio, 2017; Zou et al., 2016).

There are many research findings regarding the mediation of patience in the relationship between coping styles and resilience. According to Connor and Davidson (2003), patience is among the personal traits that affect resilience. In addition, there are various research findings confirming that patience is associated with resilience (Sorush et al., 2021; Ulukan et al., 2021). In a study conducted by Eskandari and Eskinadri (2019) on soldiers, it was determined that stress reduction and patience techniques increased the resilience levels of soldiers. In addition, patience is expressed as one of the basic skills required for the development of mindfulness skills (Eliüşük, 2014). Researchers reported that patience and mindfulness are positively related (Azizi Ziabari, 2019; Hashemi et al., 2017; Schnitker, 2012). In many intervention studies, it was determined that mindfulness increased the resilience levels of individuals (Pidgeon and Pickett, 2017; Reyes et al., 2020; Vidic and Cherup, 2019). In a study conducted by Vidic (2021) on university students, it was determined that a mindfulness-focused relaxation program increased students' resilience levels. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Liu et al. (2022), it was reported that mindfulness is associated with resilience in university students. In addition, researchers reported that mindfulness has a mediating role in the relationship between resilience and many variables such as stress (Zahra et al., 2017), cognitive reappraisal (Zarotti et al., 2020), test anxiety (Çakıroğlu et

al., 2022) etc. As a result, it is observed that there are research results in the current literature that support the model tested for the mediation of patience in the relationship between coping styles and resilience.

In this study, researchers aimed to examine the mediating role of patience in the relationship between coping styles and resilience in university students who are exposed to stressful situations. For this purpose, the following hypotheses were formulated (visualized in Figure 1):

H1: Problem-focused coping styles are positively associated with resilience.

H2: Emotion-focused coping styles are negatively associated with resilience.

H3: Problem-focused coping styles are positively associated with patience.

H4: Emotion-focused coping styles are negatively associated with patience.

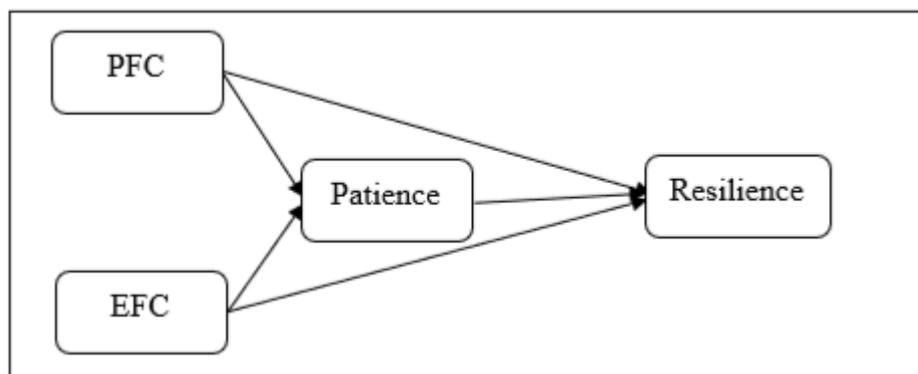
H5: Patience is positively associated with resilience.

H6: Patience mediates the relation between problem/emotion-focused coping styles and resilience.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research Design

This research is a descriptive study that aims to examine the relationships between styles of coping with stress, patience, and resilience through mediation analysis, using both relational and screening models. These models are used to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Karasar, 2016). The dependent variable of the study was resilience, the independent variables were coping styles, and the mediator variable was patience.



**Figure 1:** *The Theoretical Graph of The Mediating Role of Patience on The Relationship Between Problem/Emotion-Focused Coping Styles and Resilience, With Indicating The Hypotheses.*

### 2.2. Participants

The study's sample group comprised 401 university students (290 [72.3%] female and 111 [27.7%] were male) enrolled in several universities in Turkey during the academic year 2021–2022. The researchers selected the participants using the convenience sampling method. The ages of the students participating in the research were between 18 and 32, and their average age was 22.66 (SD = 2.89).

Among the total students, 11 (2.8%) were preparatory, 65 (16.2%) were in their 1st year, 92 (22.9%) were in their 2nd year, 104 (25.9%) were in their 3rd year, 92 (22.9%) were in their 4th year, 16 (4.0%) were in their 5th year, and 20 (5.0%) were in their 6th year.

### **2.3. Measurements**

For data collection, researchers employed the Personal Information Form, Patience Scale, Coping Styles Scale, and Brief Resilience Scale.

#### **2.3.1. Personal Information Form**

The researchers used the demographic information form to obtain personal information about the participants, such as gender, age, class, and department information.

#### **2.3.2. Brief Resilience Scale**

The scale developed by Smith et al. (2008) was adapted into Turkish by Doğan (2015). The scale consisted of 6 items, including 1 dimension. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (I don't agree at all) to 5 (I agree at all). The Cronbach's alpha was .83. Researchers have stated that people with high scores on the scale have a high level of resilience. Sample items included: "I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.". The Cronbach's alpha was .73 in this study.

#### **2.3.3. Coping Styles Scale**

The original form of the scale developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) comprised 66 items. Şahin and Durak (1995) adapted it to Turkish and shortened it. The scale consisted of 30 items, including 5 dimensions: self-confident approach, helpless approach, submissive approach, optimistic approach, and seeking social support. Items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (%0) to 4 (%100). Şahin and Durak (1995) conducted three separate studies and the Cronbach's alpha of the subscale was between .49 and .68 for the "optimistic approach," between .62 and .80 for the "self-confident approach," between .64 and .73 for the "helpless approach," between .47 and .72 for the "submissive approach," and between .45 and .47 for the "seeking social support approach.". Sample items included: "When I have a problem, I try to solve the problem step by step.". In this study, the Cronbach's alphas were .70 for the "optimistic approach", .80 for the "self-confident approach", .70 for the "helpless approach", .63 for the "submissive approach" and .48 for the "seeking social support approach.".

#### **2.3.4. Patience Scale**

Doğan and Gülmez (2014) adapted the scale, which was developed by Schnitker (2012), into Turkish. Researchers used the scale to evaluate the tendency of individuals to demonstrate patience. The scale consisted of 11 items, including 3 dimensions: patience in life hardships, interpersonal patience, and patience in daily hassles. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha was .78. Sample items included: "I am able to wait out tough times." In this study, the Cronbach's alphas were .80 for the overall scale, .60 for interpersonal patience, .68 for life hardship patience, and .43 for daily hassles patience.

## 2.4. Procedure and Ethical Approval

Researchers obtained ethical approval prior to the data collection process (Dicle University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee 02.25.2022/25623). Through an informed consent form, researchers informed participants about the study and secured their consent. In the study, researchers used measurement tools that were organized electronically via Google Form, and the data were obtained online in April–May 2022. It took approximately 15–20 minutes for each participant to complete the questionnaires.

## 2.5. Data Analysis

Researchers used the IBM SPSS-22 for descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. Amos 21.0 was used to conduct Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analyzes. Although data were initially collected from 412 participants, 11 outliers were identified and removed from the dataset. SEM analyzes were obtained from the maximum-likelihood estimation. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the measurement model and evaluate the validity of the model. Researchers examined the skewness and kurtosis coefficients for the univariate normality analysis and multivariate kurtosis coefficient for multivariate normality analysis. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients for univariate normality should be between  $-1.5$  and  $+1.5$  (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). The multivariate kurtosis coefficient for multivariate normality should be between  $-10$  and  $+10$  (Collier, 2020). Researchers determined that all the variables showed normal distribution (Table 1). The researchers used  $\chi^2/df$  (Chi-square statistic/the degree of freedom), RMSEA (Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation), CFI (Comparative Fit Indices), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) and SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) to examine the goodness of the structural model. In order to indicate a good model fit, the  $\chi^2/df$  ratio should be less than 3; the CFI and GFI should be higher than .90; and the RMSEA and SRMR should be less than .08 (Hooper et al., 2008; Hu and Bentler, 1999; Meydan and Şeşen, 2011). Researchers employed the bootstrap method, which was proposed by Preacher and Hayes (2008), for the mediation analyzes. In the bootstrap method, the significance values of the indirect and direct effects in the sample are examined by increasing the number of samples (Hayes, 2009). It is considered that the indirect effect is meaningful if the confidence intervals obtained as a result of the analysis do not contain 0 (Hayes, 2013). This study determined the bootstrap coefficient as 5000. Moreover, the study considered the 95% confidence interval as a basis for the evaluation of findings.

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1. Preliminary Statistical Analysis

Preliminary analysis results are reported in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, resilience was positively and significantly associated with patience ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ) and patience sub-factors (daily hassles [ $r = .20, p < .01$ ], life hardships [ $r = .34, p < .01$ ], and interpersonal [ $r = .32, p < .01$ ]). In addition, resilience was positively and significantly associated with the self-confident approach ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ) and the optimistic approach ( $r = .32, p < .01$ ). On the other hand, resilience was negatively and significantly associated with the helpless approach ( $r = -.47, p < .01$ ) and the submissive approach ( $r = -.25, p < .01$ ). Patience was positively and significantly associated with the self-confident approach ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ) and the optimistic approach ( $r = .44, p < .01$ ). In contrast, patience was negatively associated with the helpless approach ( $r = -.20, p < .01$ ) and the submissive approach ( $r = -.11, p < .01$ ).

### 3.2. Measurement Model

A measurement model was constructed with four latent variables (resilience, patience, problem, and emotion-focused coping) and 10 observed variables. Resilience was created by using two parcels and other latent variables were created by using sub-factors. SEM analyzes were obtained from the maximum-likelihood estimation. The multiple kurtosis of the measurement model was 9.57. The CFA results indicated a good model fit:  $\chi^2/df = 2.43$ , RMSEA = .06, GFI = .97, CFI = .96, SRMR = .04. Seeking social support (sub-factor of problem-focused coping) was insignificant and was excluded from the model. The final CFA results indicated a good model fit:  $\chi^2/df = 2.75$ , RMSEA = .06, GFI = .97, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04.

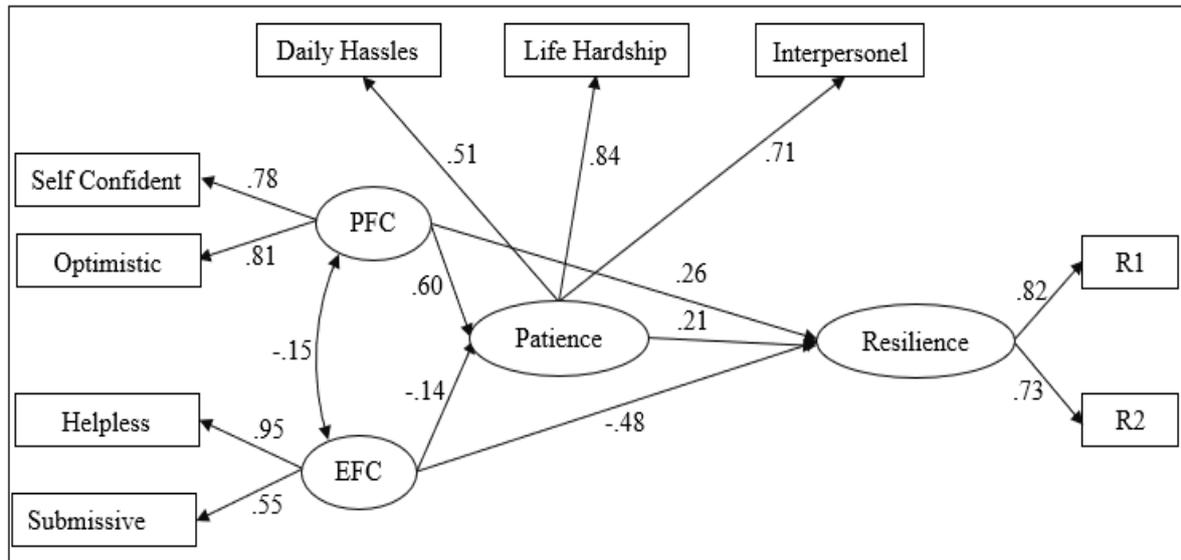
**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics and Binary Correlations Between Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>1. Resilience</b>	1									
<b>2. Patience total</b>	.36**	1								
<b>3. Daily hassles patience</b>	.20**	.71**	1							
<b>4. Life hardships patience</b>	.34**	.82**	.41**	1						
<b>5. Interpersonal patience</b>	.32**	.86**	.42**	.59**	1					
<b>6. Self-confident approach</b>	.31**	.38**	.19**	.45**	.28**	1				
<b>7. Optimistic approach</b>	.32**	.44**	.23**	.47**	.35**	.66**	1			
<b>8. Helpless approach</b>	-.47**	-.20**	-.17**	-.18**	-.16**	-.14**	-.12*	1		
<b>9. Submissive approach</b>	-.25**	-.11**	-.16**	-.06	-.05	.01	.09	.52**	1	
<b>10. Seeking social support</b>	-.02	.08	.10*	.03	.09	.10*	.02	-.01	-.02	1
<b>Mean</b>	18.44	37.24	9.41	10.68	13.49	20.45	13.59	19.23	12.43	10.58
<b>SD</b>	4.14	7.40	2.46	2.63	3.14	3.54	2.81	4.09	3.18	2.07
<b>Skewness</b>	-.03	-.13	-.07	-.44	-.27	.04	-.01	.13	.20	-.30
<b>Kurtosis</b>	.92	-.06	-.01	-.22	-.10	-.06	-.22	.10	.17	.49

Note: \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

### 3.3. Mediation Analysis

Figure 2 presents the results of the tested mediation model. The SEM with a maximum-likelihood estimation was used to examine whether the association between coping styles and resilience was mediated by patience. All factor loadings of the observed variables were significant for each latent variable ( $p < .05$ ). The mediation model had a good model fit ( $\chi^2/df = 2.75$ , RMSEA = .06, GFI = .97, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04).



**Figure 2:** The Mediating Role of Patience in The Relationship Between the Coping Styles and Resilience. Standardized Values Were Used to Report Effects. The model fit:  $\chi^2/df = 2.75$ , RMSEA = .06, GFI = .97, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04

The bootstrapping method was used to test the mediation model. Researchers estimated 5000 bias-corrected bootstraps with 95% confidence intervals. It is considered that the indirect effect is meaningful if the confidence intervals obtained as a result of the analysis do not contain zero. As shown Figure 2, PFC had a significant direct effect on patience ( $\beta = .60$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and resilience ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Patience was significantly associated with resilience ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As shown Table 2, PFC had a significant indirect effect on resilience via patience ( $\beta = .13$ ,  $p < .01$ , CI = .024/.237). EFC had a significant direct effect on patience ( $\beta = -.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and resilience ( $\beta = -.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Patience was significantly associated with resilience ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As a shown Table 2, EFC had a significant indirect effect on resilience via patience ( $\beta = -.03$ ,  $p < .05$ , CI = -.077/-.005). The results indicated that patience partially mediated the association between coping styles and resilience.

**Table 2:** Mediating Effect of Patience Between Stress Coping Styles and Resilience.

Model pathways	Estimated effects	95% CI	
		Lower bounds	Upper bounds
<i>Direct effects</i>			
PFC – Resilience	.26**	.081	.422
EFC – Resilience	-.48***	-.610	-.332
PFC – Patience	.60**	.510	.684
EFC – Patience	-.14*	-.262	-.029
Patience – Resilience	.21*	.033	.380
<i>Indirect effects</i>			
PFC – Patience – Resilience	.13*	.024	.237
EFC – Patience – Resilience	-.03*	-.077	-.005

Note: PFC = Problem focused coping, EFC = Emotion focused coping, \* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < .001$

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine the mediating role of patience in the relationships between coping styles and resilience in university students. According to study findings, there was a significant positive correlation between patience and resilience. Additionally, the study determined that the subdimensions of patience were related positively to resilience in a significant manner. Accordingly, as the level of patience of individuals increases, their level of resilience increases as well. When the researchers examined the literature, they found some studies on the relationship between patience and resilience. In a study conducted on university students, the researchers examined the relationship between devotion to God, patience, and resilience and deduced a positive and significant relationship between resilience and patience (Sorush, et al., 2021). In another study conducted on teachers, the researchers examined the relationships between patience, resilience, and happiness and determined that patience was positively related to resilience (Ulukan and Ulukan, 2021). Eskandari and Eskandari (2019) examined the effects of stress reduction and patience techniques on resilience among navy soldiers. The results of the study determined that patience techniques increased the resilience levels of soldiers by 53%. The researchers observed that the current research findings are consistent with the results obtained in previous studies. According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), patience is associated with positive social characteristics. Connor and Davidson (2003) state that patience is among the individualistic traits that affect resilience. The obtained research findings support these views. Individuals with a high level of patience, who can wait calmly in the face of challenging life events, are able to evaluate their current situation more accurately. In this manner, they can cope with negative life events more easily or reduce possible negative consequences. In this context, the researchers consider that patience facilitates individuals in maintaining or regaining their psychological health.

The study also discovered a positive correlation between patience and the optimistic approach and the self-confident approach, and a negative correlation between patience and the helpless approach and the submissive approach. The study did not find a significant relationship between the seeking social support approach and patience. When researchers examined the literature, they did not come across any study on patience and stress coping styles. However, when they examined the studies on patience, they observed that patience was related to the concepts of psychological well-being (Schnitker and Emmons, 2007), resilience (Sorush et al., 2020), problem-solving (Özdemir, 2018), emotion regulation (Eliüşük, 2014), and self-compassion (Blount and Janicik, 2000). Researchers reported that the problem-focused approach has a correlation with concepts, such as psychological well-being (Malkoç and Yalçın, 2015; Wang et al. 2022), resilience (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019), self-compassion (Aşkan, 2020), emotion regulation (Birttek, 2019), and problem-solving (Akpınar and Barlas, 2015). Alternatively, the researchers deduced that emotion-focused coping has a correlation with concepts, such as depression (Mahmoud et al., 2012; Aşkan, 2020), anxiety (Mahmoud et al., 2012), smoking (Naquin and Gilbert, 1996), emotional instability, and aggression (Carlo et al, 2012). In this context, the researchers concluded that the relevant findings in this study are consistent with the existing literature. Individuals with a high level of patience can calmly approach and wait for the right time to take action against challenging life events. For this reason, individuals can apply strategies such as information gathering, planning, goal setting, and problem-solving, and they can cope with challenging situations more functionally.

Within its scope, the study obtained another finding that resilience was related to coping styles. The study determined that resilience is positively related to the self-confident approach and the optimistic approach, and negatively related to the helpless approach and the submissive approach. Moreover, the study deduced that the seeking social support approach did not have an association with resilience. This

finding is supported by numerous research findings in the related literature (Alonso-Tapia et al., 2019; Campbell-Sills et al., 2006; Chen, 2016; Coşkun et al., 2014; Mayordomo et al. 2016; Wu et al. 2020). Individuals who employ problem-focused coping styles use strategies, such as information gathering, planning, and problem-solving, among others, to modify their current situation. Alternatively, individuals who employ emotion-focused coping styles use strategies, such as denial, daydreaming, and accusation, among others, to regulate emotional reactions. Problem-focused coping methods make it easier for individuals to cope with difficult life events, whereas emotion-focused coping methods can negatively affect the resilience of individuals by causing the chronicity of the problems faced by them.

The study results conclude that patience, coping styles, and resilience are variables related to each other. The researchers applied mediation analysis to better understand this relationship. Accordingly, the study determined that patience mediated the relationship between coping styles and resilience. The researchers examined the existing literature and concluded that there was no similar research finding in previous studies. When faced with challenging life circumstances, individuals who use emotion-focused coping mechanisms find it difficult to maintain patience. This situation causes individuals to resort to incompatible stress coping strategies, such as avoidance, accusations, and denial, among others. Consequently, the resilience of individuals might be adversely affected. Individuals who employ problem-focused coping mechanisms may be able to buy some time owing to their high level of patience. Thus, individuals can apply numerous strategies, such as exploring problems from a different perspective, collecting information, planning, and undertaking action at the right time.

## 5. LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

There are certain limitations of this study. The study participants primarily comprise university students residing in Turkey. The unbalanced female/male ratio of the participants, their similar age and education levels, and the fact that data collection was performed online using self-report scales can be considered as a limitation. In future studies, collecting data face-to-face using different measurement tools coupled with the evaluation of variables and choosing participants from different age groups and of varied education levels can help generalize the study findings. Additionally, the researchers consider that studies on individuals from different countries can be beneficial in determining cultural differences related to the research variables.

Despite the abovementioned limitations, the researchers obtained significant findings regarding the role of patience. The findings indicate that the stress coping styles have a significant effect on the resilience of individuals. Additionally, the study determined that the patience skill had a mediating effect in this relationship. The researchers consider that patience can enable individuals to cope with stressful life events more effectively. Moreover, it can help individuals protect their resilience against stressful life events. The researchers assume that designing training programs or conducting psychological interventions in the psychological counseling and guidance units of universities can improve the patience levels and coping styles of individuals and will be beneficial in protecting their resilience.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest

### Authors' Contributions

Researchers contributed equally to the study.

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