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### INTOLERANCE AND PERSEVERANCE DILEMMA IN ATHLETES: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

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**Abstract:** This study quantitatively examines the impact of psychological traits such as intolerance of uncertainty and resilience on athletes' perceptions of social support. The research was conducted with the participation of 527 athletes, utilizing a relational survey model and structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques. The sample was determined using a stratified random sampling method based on demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and type of sport. Data analysis processes were systematically conducted using IBM SPSS and AMOS software. Data collection tools included the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale, the Resilience Scale, and the Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale. The analyses revealed that these measurement instruments exhibited high levels of reliability. The results demonstrated a high degree of model fit to the data and identified strong and significant positive correlations among the scales employed. The findings of the study indicate that psychological traits such as intolerance of uncertainty and resilience significantly affect athletes' perceptions of social support. Moreover, enhancing these psychological traits may contribute positively to athletes' psychological and social adaptation processes.

**Keywords:** Sports, intolerance, resilience, perception of social support

### SPORCULARDA TAHAMMÜLSÜZLÜK VE YILMAMA İKİLEMİ: SOSYAL DESTEĞİN ROLÜ

**Öz:** Bu araştırmada, sporcuların belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ve yılmama gibi psikolojik özelliklerinin, sosyal destek algıları üzerindeki etkileri nicel bir yöntemle incelenmiştir. Çalışma, 527 sporcunun katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiş ve ilişkisel tarama modeli ile yapısal eşitlik modellemesi (YEM) teknikleri kullanılarak yürütülmüştür. Örneklem, sporcuların cinsiyet, yaş, spor dalı gibi demografik özellikleri temelinde katmanlı rastgele örnekleme yöntemiyle oluşturulmuştur. Veri analizi süreçlerinde IBM SPSS ve AMOS yazılımları kullanılarak, verilerin işlenmesi ve analizi sistematik bir şekilde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri toplama aracı olarak, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük, yılmama ve çok boyutlu algılanan sosyal destek ölçeği uygulanmış; analizler, bu ölçme araçlarının yüksek güvenilirlik düzeylerine sahip olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Elde edilen sonuçlar, yapısal modelin verilere yüksek derecede uyum sağladığını ve kullanılan ölçekler arasında güçlü ve anlamlı pozitif korelasyonlar olduğunu göstermiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları, belirsizliğe tahammülsüzlük ve yılmamlık gibi psikolojik özelliklerin sporcuların sosyal destek algıları üzerinde anlamlı etkileri olduğunu ve bu özelliklerin geliştirilmesinin, sporcuların psikolojik ve sosyal uyum süreçlerinde olumlu katkılar sağlayabileceğini göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Spor, tahammülsüzlük, yılmama, sosyal destek algısı

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## GİRİŞ

In the sports psychology literature, studies examining the effects of individual characteristics on athletes' performance, psychological well-being, healthy eating habits, and social relationships (Özmadem & Sevilmiş, 2023; Yarıyan et al., 2022; Güleşce & İlhan, 2024; Sargın & Güleşce, 2023) constitute one of the fundamental topics in this field. These studies explore in detail how traits such as intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance influence athletes' resilience in the face of challenges and their psychological adaptation processes (Şahinler, 2021; Gümüšoğlu & Aşçı, 2020). Intolerance of uncertainty generally refers to the intense anxiety and discomfort individuals experience in uncertain and unpredictable situations (Yığman & Fidan, 2021; Tortumlu & Uzun, 2023). This situation can become particularly critical due to increased stress levels during performance and before important competitions. Perseverance, on the other hand, defines the psychological resilience and sustained effort exhibited when facing challenges; this trait helps maintain motivation even in situations that may result in failure (Mazetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Güran & Tösten, 2023). Motivation is a key determinant of participation in physical activity, and studies confirm this relationship (Şimşek et al., 2023). Research indicates that these two characteristics have significant effects on athletes' perceptions of social support (Kara & Şahin, 2021; Tekkurşun et al., 2021). Social support plays a crucial role in psychological processes such as stress management, motivation, and overall well-being (Yıldız & Dirik, 2019; Çelik & Mete, 2021). For athletes, social support encompasses emotional, informational, and practical assistance received from their close environment, including coaches, teammates, family members, and friends (Scott et al., 2024; Şenel et al., 2018). Athletes with a high level of intolerance of uncertainty may experience greater stress due to uncertainties about the future, which can increase their need for social support systems (Deveci et al., 2023; Parmaksız, 2021). On the other hand, athletes with strong perseverance tend to exhibit a more resilient attitude in the face of challenges, allowing them to utilize social support resources more effectively (Aydoğan & Hadi, 2020; Malkoç & Yalçın, 2015). This study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the effects of intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance on athletes' perceptions of social support. By focusing on how these psychological traits can be developed and reinforced, it examines their potential positive impacts on overall well-being and athletic performance. The findings suggest that reducing intolerance of uncertainty and enhancing perseverance can enable athletes to utilize social support more effectively, significantly improving their overall quality of life and athletic success (Tortumlu & Uzun, 2023; Gümüšoğlu & Aşçı, 2020). In this context, no research has been found that examines the relationships between intolerance of uncertainty, perseverance, social support, and quality of life using structural equation modeling. Therefore, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the relevant literature. The hypotheses developed for this study are presented below.

### Literature Review

#### Stress and Coping Theory

A comprehensive psychological framework explains how individuals perceive, evaluate, and cope with stressful situations. According to this theory, stress arises when an individual perceives an imbalance between environmental demands and personal resources as a threat. The management of this process consists of two fundamental stages: cognitive appraisal and coping strategies. During the cognitive appraisal process, the individual determines whether the encountered situation poses a threat to their well-being. If the situation is perceived as a stressor in the primary appraisal stage, the individual evaluates their available coping resources in the secondary appraisal stage. If the individual believes they lack sufficient resources to manage the stressful situation, they may exhibit intolerance, which can lead to negative emotional

responses such as loss of motivation, anxiety, and anger. However, if the individual has access to social support systems, they can cope with stress more effectively and enhance their perseverance capacity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Social support helps mitigate the negative effects of stress on individuals by maintaining emotional balance and strengthening one's self-efficacy perception, thereby enhancing resilience (Yıldız & Dirik, 2018). In Lazarus and Folkman's model, social support is divided into three main components: emotional support, informational support, and instrumental support. Emotional support provides psychological relief by allowing individuals to share their emotions, while informational support offers guidance in problem-solving processes. Instrumental support, on the other hand, involves direct physical or material assistance. From the perspective of athletes, social support from coaches, teammates, and family members can reduce the effects of stress, lower levels of intolerance, and strengthen perseverance tendencies (İnan et al., 2024). For instance, when an athlete experiences failure during a challenging training process or feels pressured by competition, a lack of adequate social support may lead to intolerance and an increased tendency to give up. However, a coach, sports psychologist, or teammate who provides guidance and emotional support can facilitate the athlete's stress management, increase motivation, and encourage perseverance.

Within the framework of the Stress and Coping Theory, the concepts of intolerance, perseverance, and social support are directly interrelated. A lack of social support can cause an individual to perceive stressful situations as threats, thereby increasing levels of intolerance. Conversely, a strong support system can help individuals cope with stress more effectively, fostering resilience instead of intolerance and promoting perseverance behaviors (Ozbay et al., 2007; Cao et al., 2024; Chang et al., 2023). In this context, an individual's psychological resilience and coping skills depend not only on personal factors but also on environmental support systems. Particularly in athletes, establishing effective coping mechanisms for stress is crucial for sustaining both individual performance and psychological well-being. Accordingly, hypotheses have been developed in this study concerning the relationship between intolerance, perseverance, and social support, and the dynamic interactions among these variables have been comprehensively analyzed.

## **Research Hypotheses**

### **Perseverance and Intolerance of Uncertainty**

Intolerance of uncertainty refers to the psychological tendency of individuals to experience discomfort in the face of uncertain situations (Buhr & Dugas, 2002; Carleton, 2016). Particularly, individuals with low tolerance for uncertainty have been found to exert greater effort by developing strategic solutions in the face of obstacles, thereby demonstrating higher resilience in achieving their goals (Dugas et al., 1997). Similar findings have been observed in the domestic literature, indicating that developing coping strategies for uncertainty strengthens individuals' perseverance tendencies (Karagidirek, 2024; Owen, 2021; Küçükkömürler, 2017). Consequently, intolerance of uncertainty positively and significantly influences individuals' perseverance behaviors by enhancing their ability to cope with challenges.

***H1:** Perseverance has a direct, positive, and significant effect on intolerance of uncertainty.*

### **Intolerance of Uncertainty and Social Support**

Intolerance of uncertainty refers to a tendency in which individuals experience discomfort in the face of unpredictable situations, directly influencing their search for social support and the effectiveness of such support (Çoşkun, 2019). Research indicates that individuals with a low tolerance for uncertainty tend to seek greater support from their social environment to cope with

stress and perceive this support as a crucial resource in managing uncertainty (Parmaksız, 2021; Şirin et al., 2023). Particularly, these individuals are more inclined to turn to family, friends, and professional support mechanisms to attain emotional and cognitive relief (Geçgin & Sahranç, 2017; Palma et al., 2022). Studies in the domestic literature also reveal that individuals with a low tolerance for uncertainty utilize social support more intensively, and such support contributes to managing their anxiety and stress levels (Kilit et al., 2020; Şahintekin, 2021). Therefore, intolerance of uncertainty directs individuals toward social support mechanisms, creating a direct, positive, and significant effect that strengthens their psychological resilience and alleviates negative emotions stemming from uncertainty.

**H2:** *Intolerance of uncertainty has a direct, positive, and significant effect on social support.*

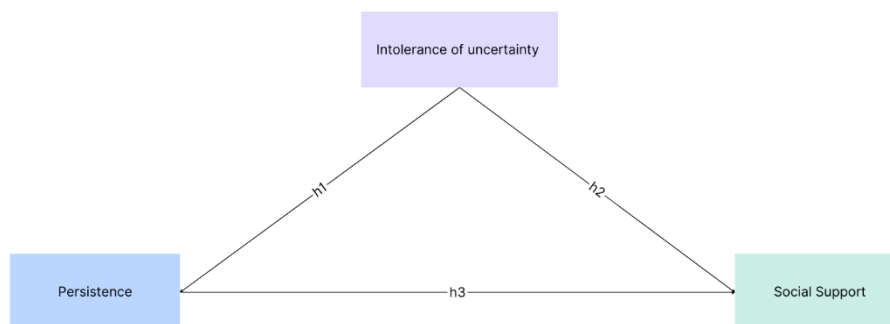
### Perseverance and Social Support

Perseverance refers to individuals' tendency to persistently continue their efforts in the face of challenges and is strongly interconnected with social support mechanisms (Kaner & Bayraklı, 2009). Research indicates that perseverant individuals establish stronger bonds with their social environment, actively seek support, and utilize this support as an effective resource for both psychological empowerment and problem-solving processes (Güney & Yalçın, 2020; Selcık, 2017). Specifically, individuals with high levels of perseverance are found to maintain their motivation and cope with difficulties more effectively by receiving emotional and cognitive support from family, friends, and colleagues (Yıldız & Dirik, 2018). Studies in the domestic literature also reveal that perseverant individuals strengthen their social support networks, and this support plays a critical role in enhancing their psychological resilience and stress management (Buz & Genç, 2019; Kavi & Karakele, 2018). In conclusion, perseverance fosters individuals' utilization of social support and enhances its effective use, exerting a direct, positive, and significant impact.

**H3:** *Perseverance has a direct and positive impact on social support.*

The theoretical model developed as a result of the literature review is presented below.

**Figure 1.** Theoretical Model



## **METHOD**

This section explains the research model, population and sample, data collection tools, data collection process, and data analysis employed to examine the predictive effect of athletes' perceptions of intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance on social support.

### **Research Model**

In this study, the relational survey model was adopted within the framework of quantitative research methods. Relational survey models are research designs aimed at identifying the common trends of variation and the degree of change between two or more variables. In this regard, they serve as an appropriate method for studies seeking to analyze relationships between variables (Tekbıyık, 2014; Karasar, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Particularly, correlational research focuses on examining the level of co-variation between variables, providing scientific data on the direction and strength of relationships. In this study, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed, allowing for the analysis of both direct and indirect effects between observable and latent variables. SEM enables the assessment of linear relationships between variables while minimizing measurement errors, providing a more robust evaluation of the relationships under investigation (Bayram, 2011; Seçer, 2015).

### **Research Group**

The research group consists of 527 individuals with diverse demographic characteristics and varying levels of interest in sports. Participants were classified based on variables such as gender, age, type of sport, athletic level, educational background, and employment status (see Table 1). The study group was formed using a sampling method that ensures a balanced representation of participants' various demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The sample was selected through stratified random sampling, a method in which different subgroups of the population are represented according to predetermined proportions (Babbie, 2020). This technique enhances the generalizability of research findings while maximizing sample diversity and minimizing error rates.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The research utilized the Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale, the Perseverance Scale, and the Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale to collect data on athletes' demographic characteristics and psychological states. A Personal Information Form, developed by the researcher, gathered data regarding participants' gender, age, type of sport, level of athletic experience, educational background, and working conditions. The Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale-12 (IUS-12) was originally developed by Carleton, Norton, and Asmundson (2007) and later adapted into Turkish by Sariçam, Erguvan, Akın, and Akça (2014). This scale consists of 12 items and employs a five-point Likert-type response scale, ranging from 1 ("Not at all characteristic of me") to 5 ("Entirely characteristic of me"), with higher scores indicating greater intolerance of uncertainty. The Perseverance Scale is a subcomponent of the General Self-Efficacy Scale, which was developed by Sherer and Adams (1983) and adapted into Turkish by Yıldırım and İlhan (2010). Comprising 17 items, this scale measures individuals' self-efficacy beliefs, particularly assessing their capacity to persist in the face of difficulties. Additionally, the Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale (MPSSS) was developed by Zimet et al. (1988) and later adapted into Turkish by Eker and Arkar (1995), with its validity and reliability studies completed by Eker, Arkar, and Yıldız in 2001. This scale evaluates the perceived social support of individuals. These instruments provide crucial data for understanding the psychological and social adaptation processes of athletes.

## Data Analysis

The analysis of the study was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), a methodological approach that integrates direct and indirect relationships between observed and latent variables, ensuring an accurate evaluation of their linear associations. Within the analytical process, the constructs of intolerance of uncertainty, perseverance, and social support were examined, and the internal consistency of the respective scales was assessed through Cronbach's alpha coefficients (.879, .760, and .850). Additionally, high factor loadings were obtained via exploratory factor analysis. The goodness-of-fit of the structural model was evaluated using the Chi-square test along with fit indices such as CFI, TLI, and RMSEA, confirming that the model demonstrated a strong fit to the data and supported the proposed hypotheses. The analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS and AMOS software, facilitating efficient data entry, cleaning, processing, and modeling.

## RESULTS

This section constitutes a comprehensive examination of the data collected throughout the research process, ensuring a thorough analysis and interpretation. In accordance with the research methodology, the data gathered in depth have been meticulously examined to provide in-depth responses to the research questions and systematically test the relevant hypotheses. Throughout this process, the data analysis techniques employed aim to ensure the scientific validity and reliability of the obtained results.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics of the Participants

Variables	Sub-Categories	n	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	274	52.0
	Female	253	48.0
<b>Age</b>	18-25	101	19.2
	26-35	108	20.5
	36-45	103	19.5
	46-55	106	20.1
	55+	109	20.7
<b>Sports</b>	Athletics	111	21.1
	Basketball	97	18.4
	Other	105	19.9
	Football	112	21.3
	Swimming	102	19.4
<b>Sports Level</b>	Amateur	156	29.6
	Professional	181	34.3
	Semi-professional	190	36.1
<b>Education Status</b>	Primary School	92	17.5
	Middle School	105	19.9
	High School	105	19.9
	University	121	23.0
	Master's degree or higher	104	19.7
<b>Working Status</b>	Works full time	132	25.0
	Works part-time	119	22.6
	Student	132	25.0
	Unemployed	144	27.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table presents the distribution of athletes based on demographic and sports-related variables. The gender distribution is nearly equal, with males representing 52% and females 48% of the sample. Regarding age categories, participants are evenly distributed across all age groups, with the youngest group (18–25 years) accounting for 19.2% and the oldest group (55

years and above) representing 20.7%. In terms of sports disciplines, athletics, football, swimming, basketball, and other sports are represented in similar proportions, with football having the highest representation at 21.3%, while basketball has the lowest at 18.4%. Amateur athletes constitute a notable portion of the sample at 29.6%. Regarding the level of athletic involvement, professionals account for 34.3%, while semi-professionals represent 36.1% of the group. Based on educational attainment, university graduates form the largest group at 23%, whereas primary school graduates constitute the least represented category at 17.5%. In terms of employment status, full-time workers and students each account for 25% of the sample, while unemployed individuals represent the highest proportion in this category at 27.3%. These data reflect diverse relationships between athletes' demographic characteristics and their engagement in sports, providing valuable demographic insights for sports management studies.

**Table 2.** Reliability and validity analyses of the scales

Scales	Number of scale items	Cronbach's Alpha
Intolerance of uncertainty	12	.879
Persistence	5	.760
Social Support	9	.850
Scale item and 'α' mean	21	.941
% Variance explained		38.0 %
KMO		.976
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	$\chi^2(5285), df(325), p(<.001)$	

The table presents the characteristics of three distinct psychological scales: intolerance of uncertainty, perseverance, and social support. The intolerance of uncertainty scale consists of 12 items with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .879, while the perseverance scale includes 5 items with a Cronbach's Alpha of .760. The social support scale comprises 9 items and has a Cronbach's Alpha value of .850. The total number of items across all scales is 21, with an overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .941. Additionally, the total variance explained by these scales is reported as 38.0%. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is .976, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity results are  $\chi^2(5285)$ ,  $df(325)$ , and  $p(<.001)$ . These findings indicate that the scales demonstrate high internal consistency and are suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3 presents the results of the exploratory factor analysis for three distinct scales: intolerance of uncertainty, perseverance, and social support. For the intolerance of uncertainty scale, the explained variance is 37.7%, with factor loadings for its 12 items ranging between 0.581 and 0.654, all of which load onto a single factor. The perseverance scale has an explained variance of 38.9%, with factor loadings for its 5 items ranging from 0.593 to 0.645, again loading onto a single factor. Similarly, the social support scale demonstrates an explained variance of 38.8%, with its 9 items exhibiting factor loadings between 0.596 and 0.652, all clustering within one factor. These findings indicate that all three scales possess high factor loadings and are concentrated on a single factor, demonstrating strong and focused factorial structures.



of freedom (df) of 296 and a p-value of  $<.001$ , indicating that while the model fits the data well, there remains a statistically significant difference between the model and the observed data. Fit indices such as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI) are all reported at 0.996, reflecting a very high model fit. Similarly, the TLI and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) show values of 0.995 and 0.996, respectively, further supporting strong model fit. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Relative Fit Index (RFI) are slightly lower at 0.941 and 0.935, respectively, but still indicate good model fit. The Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI) is 0.857, assessing the parsimony of the model. Additionally, low error values are observed, with the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) at 0.024 and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) at 0.012, indicating that the model represents the dataset exceptionally well. Each of these indices collectively confirms that the model exhibits a strong fit to the data, suggesting that it is both valid and reliable.

**Table 5.** Correlation Matrix of the Scales

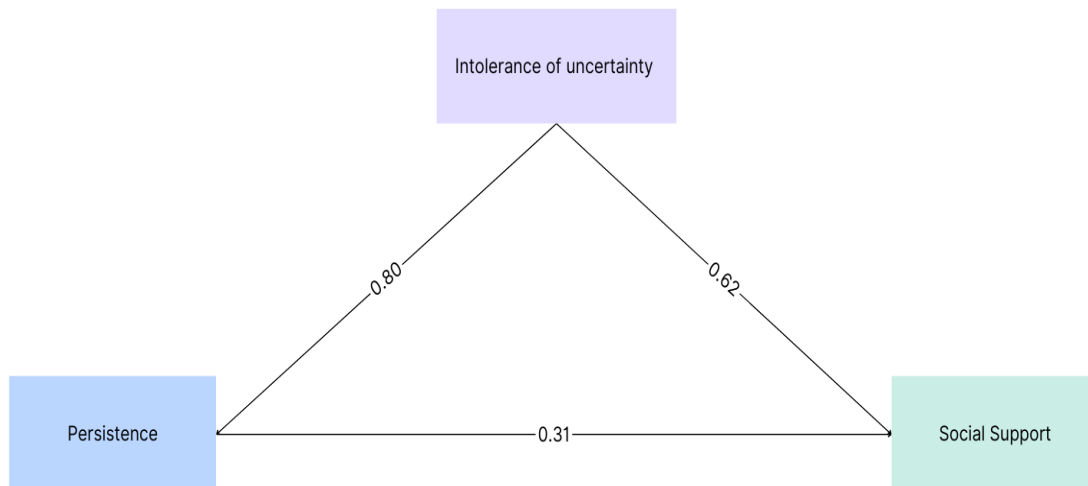
		<b>IU</b>	<b>PS</b>	<b>SSS</b>
Intolerance of uncertainty	r	-		
	df	-		
	p	-		
Persistence Scale	r	0.795*	-	
	df	525	-	
	p	$<.001$	-	
Social Support Scale	r	0.862*	0.798*	-
	df	525	525	-
	p	$<.001$	$<.001$	-

Note.  $H_a$  is positive correlation

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .001$ , one-tailed

The data in the table indicate a positive correlation among the variables IU (Intolerance of Uncertainty), PS (Persistence), and SS (Social Support). The correlation coefficient (r) and the statistical significance level (p) of the relationships are reported. The correlation between IU and P was found to be  $r = 0.795$ , which is highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Similarly, a strong positive correlation was detected between IU and SS ( $r = 0.862$ ), and this relationship was also statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Additionally, a high and significant positive correlation was observed between P and SS ( $r = 0.798$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In all analyses, the sample size (df = 525) was kept relatively large, and a one-tailed hypothesis test ( $H_a$ : positive correlation) was employed. The results confirm that the correlations are strong and statistically significant.

**Figure 2. Structural Equation Model**



**Table 6.** Structural Equation Model Results

Type	Effect	Estimate	SE	95% C.I. (a)		$\beta$	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	PS $\Rightarrow$ İU $\Rightarrow$ SSS	0.462	0.0296	0.404	0.520	0.492	15.64	< .001
Component	PS $\Rightarrow$ İU	0.721	0.0239	0.674	0.768	0.795	30.11	< .001
	İU $\Rightarrow$ SSS	0.641	0.0350	0.572	0.710	0.619	18.30	< .001
Direct	PS $\Rightarrow$ SSS	0.287	0.0318	0.225	0.349	0.306	9.03	< .001
Total	PS $\Rightarrow$ SSS	0.749	0.0246	0.701	0.797	0.798	30.39	< .001

This table presents the mediation analysis results, showing the direct, indirect, and total effects among PS (Loneliness Scale), IU (Intolerance of Uncertainty), and SSS (Social Support Scale). The indirect effect from PS to SSS (PS  $\Rightarrow$  IU  $\Rightarrow$  SSS) has an estimated effect size of 0.462 with a 95% confidence interval (CI) of 0.404 to 0.520, and this effect is statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). The direct effect from PS to IU is 0.721, and from IU to SSS is 0.641, both showing high statistical significance ( $z = 30.11$ ,  $z = 18.30$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Additionally, the direct effect from ML (Meaning of Life) to SLS (Stress Level Scale) is 0.287 (95% CI: 0.225–0.349,  $p < .001$ ). The total effect (PS  $\Rightarrow$  SSS) is estimated at 0.749 (95% CI: 0.701–0.797,  $z = 30.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that PS has a strong overall effect on SSS. These results confirm that the relationships among the analyzed scales are strong and statistically significant (see Table 6).

**Table 7.** Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Results
H <sub>1</sub> The intolerance of uncertainty has a direct, positive, and significant effect on perseverance.	<b>Support</b>
H <sub>2</sub> Intolerance of uncertainty has a direct, positive, and significant effect on social support.	<b>Support</b>
H <sub>3</sub> Perseverance has a direct, positive effect on social support.	<b>Support</b>

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the effects of intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance on athletes' perceptions of social support. The research findings demonstrated that these two psychological traits significantly influence athletes' perceptions of social support. In a study conducted by Parmaksız (2021), research examining the effects of intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance on athletes' perceptions of social support also indicated significant effects of these psychological traits on social support perception. Furthermore, in another study investigating the relationships between athletes' mental resilience, perfectionism, and intolerance of uncertainty, Gümüşoğlu and Aşçı (2020) found that athletes with low mental resilience were more intolerant of uncertain situations, which could impact their perception of social support. Similar findings exist in the international literature. For instance, a study conducted in Japan during the COVID-19 pandemic examined the relationships between student-athletes' identities, mental health, and social support, revealing that social support positively affected athletes' psychological well-being (Nikopoulou et al., 2020). Similarly, the study by Acar and Kalyon (2024) investigated the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty, mindfulness, and psychological well-being with fear of missing out, finding that social support was related to intolerance of uncertainty. Specifically, intolerance of uncertainty emerged as a need to enhance the support athletes receive from their social environment, while perseverance was considered an important resilience factor in coping with challenges (Deveci et al., 2023).

The analyses conducted indicated high reliability of the measurement scales and demonstrated a good fit of the structural equation model to the data. The study findings suggested that intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance affect athletes' perceptions of social support through both direct and indirect pathways. Research indicates that intolerance of uncertainty

and perseverance have both direct and indirect effects on athletes' perceptions of social support. Notably, individuals with high levels of intolerance of uncertainty tend to have negatively affected perceptions of social support, which is also associated with performance anxiety (Robinson & Freeston, 2015). In a study conducted by Özden and Ermiş (2024), perceived social support was found to play a moderating role in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and cognitive flexibility. This finding suggests that social support serves as a crucial mediating variable in the interaction between intolerance of uncertainty and cognitive flexibility. Similarly, a study conducted on university students found that emotional regulation difficulties played a predictive role in the relationship between intolerance of uncertainty and psychological resilience (Gözel et al., 2024). This result indicates that individuals' emotional responses to uncertainty significantly influence their perception of social support and overall psychological health.

Consequently, these psychological characteristics may have significant effects on athletes' overall well-being and performance. The study by Şahin and Güçlü (2018) demonstrated that athletes' emotional responses to uncertainty significantly affect their perceived social support and overall psychological health. Additionally, it was found that there is a positive relationship between athletes' perceived social support and their coping strategies for stress, meaning that athletes who receive support from their families, friends, and loved ones tend to use more effective methods to cope with stress (Yıldız & Dirik, 2019). Moreover, a study by Kalkavan (2021) examined athletes' stress coping strategies and emphasized the role of social support in this process. Another study highlighted the role of social support in stress management among athletes (Koçak & Çolak, 2023), while Sulu et al. (2021) compared stress coping strategies of team and individual sport athletes, concluding that social support has a significant impact.

In conclusion, the strong positive correlations between intolerance of uncertainty, perseverance, and social support play a critical role in understanding the impact of athletes' psychological traits on their perceptions of social support and overall well-being. These findings suggest that developing athletes' traits of intolerance of uncertainty and perseverance may enable them to benefit more effectively from social support systems, ultimately enhancing their performance.

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