

Psychological Well-Being in Sport and Perceived Social Support as Predictors of Sport Alienation

Sporda Yabancılaşmanın Yordayıcısı Olarak Sporda Psikolojik İyi Oluş ve Algılanan Sosyal Destekle İlişkisi

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictive roles of psychological well-being in sport and perceived social support on sport alienation among sport sciences students within a mental health perspective. The study was conducted using a quantitative correlational research design. The sample consisted of 251 students enrolled in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at a public university in Türkiye. Data were collected using the Psychological Well-Being in Sport Scale, the Sport Alienation Scale, and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. Pearson correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis were employed to analyze the data. The findings revealed a moderate and negative relationship between psychological well-being in sport and sport alienation. Moreover, psychological well-being in sport was found to be a significant predictor of sport alienation. Although a low and significant negative relationship was observed between perceived social support and sport alienation, perceived social support did not significantly predict sport alienation in the regression analysis. The results indicate that psychological well-being functions as a protective mental health resource against sport alienation, while perceived social support may play a more supportive and indirect role. Overall, the findings suggest that supporting the psychological and psychosocial well-being of sport sciences students may contribute to reducing sport alienation. From a health sciences perspective, promoting psychological well-being in sport environments appears to be important for strengthening students' mental and social health.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being in Sport, Sport Alienation, Perceived Social Support, Mental Health, Sport Sciences Students.

ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı, spor bilimleri öğrencilerinde sporda psikolojik iyi oluşun ve algılanan sosyal desteğin ruh sağlığı perspektifinde sporda yabancılaşmayı yordayıcı rollerini incelemektir. Araştırma, nicel araştırma yaklaşımına dayalı ilişkisel tarama modelinde yürütülmüş olup, değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler korelasyonel bir desen çerçevesinde incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemini, Türkiye'de lisans düzeyinde spor bilimleri alanında öğrenim gören 251 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Veri toplama araçları olarak Sporda Psikolojik İyi Oluş Ölçeği, Sporda Yabancılaşma Ölçeği ve Çok Boyutlu Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Pearson korelasyon analizi ve çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular, sporda psikolojik iyi oluş ile sporda yabancılaşma arasında orta düzeyde ve negatif yönlü bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca sporda psikolojik iyi oluşun, sporda yabancılaşmanın anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olduğu belirlenmiştir. Algılanan sosyal destek ile sporda yabancılaşma arasında düşük düzeyde ve negatif yönlü bir ilişki saptanmasına rağmen, algılanan sosyal desteğin sporda yabancılaşmayı doğrudan yordamadığı görülmüştür. Bulgular, psikolojik iyi oluşun sporda yabancılaşmaya karşı koruyucu bir ruh sağlığı kaynağı olduğunu; algılanan sosyal desteğin ise daha çok destekleyici ve dolaylı bir rol üstlenebileceğini göstermektedir. Araştırma sonuçları, spor bilimleri öğrencilerinin psikolojik ve psikososyal sağlıklarının desteklenmesinin sporda yabancılaşmanın azaltılmasına katkı sağlayabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, spor ortamlarında psikolojik iyi oluşu güçlendirmeye yönelik uygulamaların sağlık bilimleri açısından önemli olduğu söylenebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sporda Psikolojik İyi Oluş, Sporda Yabancılaşma, Algılanan Sosyal Destek, Ruh Sağlığı, Spor Bilimleri Öğrencileri.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary studies in the field of health sciences demonstrate that sport affects not only individuals' physical capacities but also their psychological and social health to a significant extent (1,11,12). The World Health Organization defines health not merely as the absence of disease or disability, but as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (1). Within this holistic framework, sport plays an important role in maintaining healthy lifestyle behaviors and supporting psychosocial well-being. In particular, students of sport sciences are simultaneously exposed to various psychological risk and protective factors due to both academic demands and expectations related to athletic performance.

Psychology is defined as the science of behavior and mental processes. It is often stated that psychology has a very long past but a relatively short history as a scientific discipline. For centuries, philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle showed interest in individuals' attitudes and cognitive processes. However, until the end of the nineteenth century, it was not possible to apply scientific methods to issues that had long occupied philosophical thought. With the application of scientific methods, psychology separated from philosophy and emerged as an independent science (2). One of the concepts closely related to psychology is well-being.

Within the field of positive psychology, well-being is sometimes used as a concept synonymous with happiness, while at other times it is discussed in close relation to other forms of well-being, such as psychological, objective, or subjective well-being. The notion of well-being can be traced back to Aristotle, who described well-being (eudaimonia) as the highest state that individuals can achieve through their actions (3). After philosophy and psychology became distinct disciplines, psychology continued to examine well-being within its own theoretical and empirical frameworks. It was emphasized that well-being does not simply mean the absence of illness, but rather is grounded in an individual's ability to realize their existing

potential at the highest level (4). McGregor and Little associated well-being with the evaluation of life meaning and personal goals (5), whereas Ryan and Deci conceptualized well-being in terms of basic psychological needs (6). According to their view, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fundamental psychological needs, and the degree to which these needs are satisfied reflects an individual's level of well-being. Within this historical and theoretical development, contemporary sport psychology has adopted these philosophical and psychological foundations to conceptualize psychological well-being as a key mental health resource in sport settings.

Psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct associated with finding life meaningful, feeling competent, and maintaining positive affect. Keyes conceptualized psychological well-being as a core indicator of mental and social functioning and emphasized that high levels of psychological well-being play a protective role in overall health (7). In the context of sport, psychological well-being is closely related to satisfaction derived from sport participation, motivation levels, perceived self-efficacy, and the quality of social relationships within the sport environment, as well as overall mental health outcomes in sport settings (8,9,10). It has been reported that sport sciences students with higher levels of psychological well-being cope more effectively with stress, develop more positive attitudes toward the sport environment, and sustain their participation in sport more consistently (10). Sport and psychology are two closely related fields, and sport is thought to contribute to individuals' mental well-being (11).

Another important concept closely associated with psychological well-being among sport sciences students is alienation in sport. Seeman's theory of alienation suggests that detachment from activities, feelings of meaninglessness, and social isolation have negative effects on psychosocial health (12). In the sport context, alienation may manifest

as decreased motivation for participation, withdrawal from social relationships, and a loss of meaning attributed to sport. Such experiences may lead not only to reduced sport participation but also to diminished psychological well-being and the emergence of unhealthy behavioral patterns.

The literature indicates that alienation in sport is associated with negative psychological processes such as stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (13). University students who engage in sport may encounter numerous stressors due to academic responsibilities and expectations related to athletic performance. In this respect, identifying the individual and psychosocial variables associated with alienation in sport is of particular importance from a health sciences perspective. Perceived social support refers to the emotional and social support that individuals believe they receive from their family, friends, and significant others and is considered to play a protective role in mental health (14). In the health sciences literature, social support is regarded as a fundamental environmental resource that enhances individuals' capacity to cope with stress and supports psychological well-being (15). Although perceived social support in the sport environment may strengthen individuals' connection to sport, there is ongoing debate as to whether its relationship with alienation in sport is direct or indirect. Existing studies generally indicate inverse relationships between psychological well-being and alienation in sport. However, studies conducted in Türkiye that simultaneously examine psychological well-being and perceived social support in relation to alienation in sport, and that investigate the predictive roles of these variables among sport sciences students, remain limited. Although a limited number of studies conducted in Türkiye have examined psychological well-

being or social support in sport-related contexts, these studies have generally focused on performance, motivation, or burnout, rather than alienation in sport. From a health sciences perspective, psychological well-being is not confined solely to subjective life satisfaction but is considered a fundamental protective factor for the sustainability of mental and psychosocial health. Supporting psychological well-being in sport environments may enhance individuals' capacity to cope with stress, strengthen their sense of meaning related to sport, and reduce tendencies toward alienation. In this regard, psychological well-being can be viewed as a protective mental health resource against alienation in sport. Although perceived social support is an important environmental factor influencing the quality of relationships in sport settings, it offers a more comprehensive explanatory framework when considered alongside individuals' psychological resources. The present study aims to contribute to the evaluation of sport environments in terms of mental and psychosocial health by examining the relationships between psychological well-being in sport, perceived social support, and alienation in sport among students of sport sciences.

Research Hypotheses

H1. There is a negative relationship between psychological well-being in sport and alienation in sport among students of sport sciences.

H2. Psychological well-being in sport significantly predicts alienation in sport among students of sport sciences.

H3. There is a negative relationship between perceived social support and alienation in sport among students of sport sciences.

METHOD

Research Design

This study was conducted using a relational survey model based on a quantitative research approach in order to

examine the relationships between perceived social support, psychological well-being in sport, and alienation in sport among students of sport sciences. The relationships among the variables and their predictive effects were

examined within the framework of the proposed research model.

Within the scope of the study, psychological well-being in sport and perceived social support were treated as independent variables, while alienation in sport was considered the dependent variable. Accordingly, the predictive effect of psychological well-being in sport on alienation in sport was examined, and the role of perceived social support within the relationships among the variables was evaluated. The research model did not aim to test causal relationships; rather, it was designed to assess statistical associations and predictive relationships among the variables.

Participants

The sample of the study consisted of a total of 251 students enrolled in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at a public university in Türkiye. Students studying in the departments of Physical Education and Sport Teaching, Coaching Education, Sport Management, and Recreation who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study were included. The sample was selected using a convenience sampling method based on the voluntary participation of undergraduate students enrolled in sport sciences programs.

The inclusion criteria for the study were: (a) being an undergraduate student enrolled in a sport sciences program, (b) actively continuing education during the data collection period, and (c) voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study. The exclusion criteria included incomplete questionnaire responses and participants who were not actively enrolled in sport sciences programs at the time of data collection. No upper age limit was specified.

The sample group was determined based on accessibility and voluntary participation, consistent with the relational survey design of the study. Undergraduate students in sport sciences were selected as the target population because they are exposed to both academic and sport-related demands, which makes them a relevant group for examining psychological

well-being, perceived social support, and alienation in sport.

Participants' demographic information (e.g., age, gender, department, years of sport participation, weekly exercise duration) was collected using a personal information form developed by the researcher.

Data Collection Instruments

Psychological well-being in sport was measured using the Psychological Well-Being in Sport Scale developed by İcık and Caz. The scale consists of 23 items and three subdimensions and is structured on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of psychological well-being in sport. In the original scale development study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was reported as .93.

Alienation in sport was assessed using the scale developed by Deryahanoğlu (2019), which aims to measure individuals' levels of alienation within the sport context. The scale comprises the subdimensions of meaninglessness, powerlessness, and social isolation and is rated on a five-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of alienation in sport.

Perceived social support was measured using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), originally developed by Zimet et al. and adapted into Turkish by Eker and Arkar. The scale consists of 12 items and three subdimensions representing support received from different sources. It is a seven-point Likert-type scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived social support. In the Turkish adaptation study, the reliability coefficient was reported as .89. In the present study, the reliability of all measurement instruments was re-evaluated using internal consistency analysis. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained from the current sample indicated high reliability for all scales.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected after obtaining approval from the relevant university ethics committee. Participants were informed about

the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and that the data provided would be used solely for scientific purposes.

Data collection was carried out using face-to-face questionnaire administration and online data collection methods via Google Forms. The confidentiality of participants' identity information was ensured, and data security was maintained throughout the data collection process.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Prior to the main analyses, the dataset was examined in terms of missing data, outliers, and assumptions of normality. A total of 251 participants were included in the final analyses. The dataset was examined for missing data prior to analysis, and the amount of missing data was minimal. As no systematic or substantial missing data were detected, no participants were excluded from the analyses.

The assumption of normality was evaluated by examining skewness and kurtosis values, as well as histogram and Q-Q plots. Outliers were assessed based on standardized residual values (z-scores), Cook's distance, and Mahalanobis distance criteria. The assumption of multicollinearity was tested by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values. The results indicated that VIF values for all independent variables were below 10 and tolerance values were above .10, suggesting that there were no

serious multicollinearity problems. Specifically, VIF values ranged between 1.12 and 1.36, while tolerance values ranged from .74 to .89, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern in the regression model.

In the present study, the internal consistency reliability of the measurement instruments was re-examined. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be .94 for the Psychological Well-Being in Sport Scale, .88 for the Sport Alienation Scale, and .90 for the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, indicating high internal consistency.

Normality assumptions were additionally evaluated based on skewness and kurtosis values. Skewness values ranged between -0.84 and 0.67, and kurtosis values ranged between -0.91 and 0.72 for all study variables. These values fall within the acceptable range for normal distribution (± 1), as suggested in the literature (19). Therefore, the data were considered to be normally distributed.

Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for human research, and ethical approval was obtained from the Trabzon University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee with decision number 2025-11/1.11 at its meeting on November 7, 2025, prior to data collection.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings regarding the relationships among perceived social support, alienation in sport, and psychological well-being in sport among students in sport sciences, as well as the predictive power of these variables on alienation in sport. First, the relationships among perceived social support, alienation in sport, and psychological well-being in sport were examined using Pearson correlation analysis. Subsequently, the extent to which perceived social support and psychological

well-being in sport predicted alienation in sport was tested through multiple linear regression analysis. The statistical findings are presented below in tabular form. In addition, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for all study variables were examined. Given that the primary focus of the Results section was on relational and predictive analyses, these values are not presented in a separate table but are available from the authors upon request.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

| Variable | Group | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 140 | 55.8 |
| | Female | 111 | 44.2 |
| Department | Coaching Education | 69 | 27.5 |
| | Physical Education and Sport Teaching | 66 | 26.3 |
| | Recreation | 40 | 15.9 |
| | Sport Management | 76 | 30.3 |
| Type of Sport | Individual Sport | 105 | 41.8 |
| | Team Sport | 146 | 58.2 |
| Year of Study | 1st year | 113 | 45.1 |
| | 2nd year | 49 | 19.5 |
| | 3rd year | 39 | 15.5 |
| | 4th year | 50 | 19.9 |
| Age (years) | Mean ± SD | 20.43 ±3.23 | |
| | Min-Max | 17-42 | |
| | Mean± SD | 6.73 ± 3.83 | |
| Years of Sport Participation | Min-Max | 0-20 | |

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients Among the Variables

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|---|
| 1. Perceived Social Support | — | | |
| 2. Sport Alienation | -.23** | — | |
| 3. Psychological Well-Being in Sport | .35** | -.42** | — |

Note. $p < .01$ indicates statistical significance.

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients among perceived social support, alienation in sport, and psychological well-being in sport. The findings indicate a low-level, negative, and statistically significant relationship between perceived social support and alienation in sport ($r = -.23, p < .01$). This result suggests that as individuals' levels of perceived social support increase, their levels of alienation from sport decrease.

In addition, a moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between perceived social support and psychological well-being in sport ($r = .35, p < .01$). This finding indicates that perceived social support is an important protective factor that strengthens individuals' psychological well-being in the sport context. Furthermore, a moderate, negative, and statistically significant relationship was observed between alienation in sport and psychological well-being in sport ($r = -.42, p < .01$),

demonstrating that as alienation in sport increases, individuals' levels of psychological well-being decrease markedly.

Table 3. Results of the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Alienation in Sport from Perceived Social Support and Psychological Well-Being in Sport

| Predictor Variables | B | SE | β | t | p |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------|---------|-------|--------|
| Constant | 117.04 | 7.08 | — | 16.54 | < .001 |
| Perceived Social Support | -0.11 | 0.07 | -.09 | -1.53 | .128 |
| Psychological Well-Being in Sport | -0.46 | 0.07 | -.39 | -6.32 | < .001 |

Model Summary: $R = .43, R^2 = .18, Adjusted R^2 = .18$
ANOVA: $F(2, 248) = 28.05, p < .001$
 Note. Dependent variable: Sport Alienation. $N = 251$.

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis conducted to examine the predictive power of perceived social support and psychological well-being in sport on alienation in sport are presented in Table 3. The findings indicate that the regression model is statistically significant, $F(2, 248) = 28.05, p < .001$. The model explains approximately 18% of the total variance in alienation in sport ($R^2 = .18$), which represents a moderate and meaningful effect size within the context of behavioral sciences.

An examination of the regression coefficients reveals that psychological well-being in sport is a strong and statistically significant predictor of alienation in sport ($\beta = -.39, p < .001$). Accordingly, as the psychological well-being levels of sport sciences students increase, their levels of alienation from sport decrease significantly. This finding highlights the central and decisive role of psychological well-being in explaining alienation in sport.

In contrast, the direct effect of perceived social support on alienation in sport was not found to be statistically significant ($\beta = -.09$, $p = .128$). However, this result should not be interpreted as indicating that perceived social support is unimportant. When considered together with the correlation findings, it can be suggested that perceived social support may contribute to the understanding of alienation in sport when examined alongside

more central psychological processes such as psychological well-being.

Overall, the findings indicate that psychological well-being serves as a fundamental risk-protective factor in explaining alienation in sport, whereas perceived social support appears to assume a more supportive role.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationships between perceived social support, psychological well-being in sport, and alienation in sport among students of sport sciences. The findings revealed that psychological well-being in sport was moderately and negatively associated with alienation in sport and that psychological well-being significantly predicted alienation in sport. In contrast, although a low but statistically significant relationship was found between perceived social support and alienation in sport, perceived social support did not directly predict alienation in sport in the multiple linear regression analysis. These results suggest that individuals' psychological resources may be more decisive than perceived environmental support in explaining alienation in sport. The strong predictive role of psychological well-being in sport on alienation is consistent with prior research emphasizing psychological well-being as a core protective factor against maladaptive outcomes in both academic and sport contexts. In this context, the present study extends existing evidence by indicating that psychological well-being in sport may play an important role in explaining alienation in sport among students of sport sciences.

The negative relationship between psychological well-being and alienation in sport is largely consistent with theoretical approaches in the sport psychology and health sciences literature. From a mental health perspective, psychological well-being is increasingly conceptualized not merely as the absence of psychological distress, but as the presence of flourishing and optimal functioning, which serves as a protective

factor against maladaptive outcomes (16). Psychological well-being encompasses core psychological processes such as finding life meaningful, feeling competent, and maintaining positive affect (7). In the sport context, these processes may directly influence the meaning individuals attribute to sport, their subjective connection with the sport environment, and their motivation to continue participating in sport. The findings of the present study indicate that as levels of psychological well-being increase, alienation in sport decreases, suggesting that psychological well-being may function as a protective psychological resource against alienation in sport. Similar findings have been reported in previous studies, indicating that psychological well-being plays a key role in protecting individuals from maladaptive psychological outcomes such as alienation and burnout in academic and sport contexts (17, 18).

Alienation in sport is characterized by reduced motivation toward sport participation, feelings of detachment from social relationships within the sport environment, and a loss of meaning attributed to sport (12). Particularly during the university period, students who engage in sport may be exposed to multiple stressors, including academic responsibilities, performance expectations, and social adaptation demands. In this context, individuals with lower levels of psychological well-being may experience greater difficulty coping with these stressors and may be more prone to alienation. Supporting this interpretation, previous studies have shown that stress and burnout experienced in sport

settings can negatively affect individuals' attitudes toward sport (13).

In the present study, a low-level, negative relationship was observed between perceived social support and alienation in sport; however, perceived social support did not emerge as a direct predictor of alienation in sport. Although perceived social support was not found to be a significant direct predictor of alienation in the regression analysis, the observed negative correlation suggests that social support may still play a supportive or indirect role in individuals' sport experiences. This finding indicates that social support alone may not be sufficient to reduce alienation unless it operates through more central psychological mechanisms such as psychological well-being. This finding suggests that the influence of social support on alienation in sport may be limited and indirect. In the health sciences literature, social support is defined as an important environmental resource that enhances individuals' capacity to cope with stress and supports mental well-being (14,15), and similar buffering effects of social support have been reported in sport-related contexts (20,21). However, social support alone may be insufficient to fully explain individuals' subjective experiences in the sport environment; rather, considering social support together with individuals' psychological characteristics appears to provide a more comprehensive explanatory framework.

The lack of a significant direct predictive effect of perceived social support indicates that the potential buffering role of social support against alienation in sport may be closely linked to individuals' levels of psychological well-being. Previous research has reported strong associations between social support and psychological well-being, motivation, and coping with stress (19,20). In this regard, perceived social support may be viewed not as a factor that directly shapes sport experiences, but rather as a contextual resource that supports psychological well-being.

From a health sciences perspective, these findings highlight that sport environments influence not only individuals' physical health but also their mental and social well-being. Previous studies conducted in sport and exercise settings have similarly emphasized that psychological well-being is closely associated with positive health beliefs, adaptive behaviors, and mental health outcomes, highlighting its central role as a protective psychosocial resource in sport environments (22). The prominence of psychological well-being as a factor reducing alienation in sport underscores the importance of psychological support practices and preventive interventions for sport sciences students. Counseling services, psychoeducational programs, and the creation of supportive sport environments aimed at enhancing psychological well-being may contribute to reducing alienation in sport.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicate that psychological well-being in sport is a significant and negative predictor of alienation in sport among students of sport sciences. As psychological well-being increases, students' levels of alienation from sport decrease. Although perceived social support was negatively associated with alienation in sport, it did not emerge as a significant direct predictor in the regression analysis.

Overall, the results highlight the importance of psychological well-being as a

key mental health resource in sport environments. Supporting this interpretation, previous research has shown that psychological and cognitive resources related to physical activity are positively associated with adaptive outcomes and can function as important predictors of healthy behaviors and engagement in sport-related contexts (23).

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be proposed:

Interventions aimed at supporting psychological well-being may contribute to

reducing levels of alienation in sport among sport science students. It is recommended that universities expand psychological counseling services, psychoeducational programs, and supportive practices designed to enhance mental well-being for students in sport sciences.

Structuring sport environments in a psychosocially supportive manner may strengthen students' connection to sport. Practices that promote communication, participation, and a sense of belonging in training settings may help reduce alienation in sport.

Although perceived social support was not found to be a significant direct predictor, strengthening social support resources may indirectly enhance students' psychological well-being. In this context, encouraging supportive attitudes from family members, peers, and the academic environment toward sport sciences students is considered important.

Future research employing longitudinal designs may allow for a more detailed examination of how the relationships among psychological well-being, social support, and alienation in sport evolve over time. In addition, incorporating psychological variables such as motivation, stress, burnout, and self-efficacy into the research model may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of alienation in sport. Furthermore, developing practices that support feelings of belonging, meaning, and participation in sport settings may help strengthen students' subjective connection to sport.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant role of psychological well-being in understanding alienation in sport among students of sport sciences and contributes to the health sciences literature by emphasizing the importance of evaluating sport environments from a psychological health perspective.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to draw causal inferences regarding the relationships among psychological well-being, perceived social support, and alienation in sport. Second, the data were collected from undergraduate students in sport sciences, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other student populations or sport-related groups. In addition, the reliance on self-report measurement instruments may have introduced response bias. Future studies employing longitudinal designs, multi-source data, and more diverse samples are recommended to address these limitations and further strengthen the evidence base.

Future research should consider employing longitudinal and experimental designs to better capture causal relationships among psychological well-being, social support, and alienation in sport. In addition, studies using mixed-method approaches or incorporating objective indicators alongside self-report measures may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying alienation in sport contexts.

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