The Validity and Reliability of Arabic Version of the Psychological Defeat Scale

Faisal Saeed Aldawsari[1], Mohamed Mahmoud El-Gammal[2], Mohamed Sayed Abdellatif[3*], Sherif Ahmed Ibrahim[4], Mashael Nasser Ayed Al-Dosari[5]

Abstract

The psychological defeat represents a complex and debilitating emotional and mental state that often emerges as a response to prolonged adversity or traumatic experiences. It leads individuals to grapple with profound feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. This present study is primarily focused on the development and validation of a psychometric instrument designed to assess psychological defeat among university students. Employing a descriptive research approach, the scale was administered to a sample comprising 412 students enrolled at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. Data analysis encompassed several statistical techniques, including Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, Composite Reliability (CR), and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The outcomes of the statistical analysis within this research underscore the scale's robust validity for gauging psychological defeat within the research sample. Factor analysis revealed the existence of four distinct dimensions within psychological defeat: psychological debility, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-deficit. Consequently, the Psychological Defeat Scale exhibits a noteworthy level of internal consistency, construct validity, and test-retest reliability, thereby affirming its utility and credibility for research applications.

Keywords: *Psychometric properties; psychological defeat; university students*

1. Introduction

University students, undergoing significant transitions and facing various academic, social, and personal challenges, are a demographic uniquely susceptible to experiencing psychological defeat. The young people of today find themselves in a rapidly changing world across various domains of life, contending with social, academic, psychological, and intellectual challenges that may obstruct the realization of their goals and aspirations. Moreover, the perception of certain individuals regarding the vulnerability experienced by some countries and minorities can exert psychological pressure, potentially rendering these young individuals susceptible to psychological defeat (Abdellatif, 2022; Abu Halawa & Rizk, 2013; Hasbullah, 2020; Griffiths et al., 2014). Understanding the factors contributing to this phenomenon and its implications for student's mental well-being and academic performance is of paramount importance for

[1] Special Education Department, College of Education, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia, Email: f.aldawasri@psau.edu.sa
[2] Department of Islamic studies, College of Islamic Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University
Email: malgammal@hbku.edu.qa/ melgammal192@gmail.com
[3] Department of Educational Sciences, College of Education, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia/ Department of Educational Psychology, College of Education in Assiut, Al-Azhar University, EGYPT
*Corresponding author Email: m.heby@psau.edu.sa, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2212-5256
[4] Department of Educational Technology, College of Education, University of Bisha, Bisha 61922, Saudi Arabia, Email: saebrhim@ub.edu.sa
[5] Department of Educational Sciences, College of Education, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia, Email: m.alrdaan@psau.edu.sa

research and academic discourse.

Individuals experiencing intellectual and cultural conflicts, value erosion, frustration, deprivation, and chaos tend to develop a heightened sense of psychological defeat (Abdulsamad, 2013; Taylor et al., 2011). The situation becomes notably intricate when this defeat extends to the realm of ideas, principles, and values. According to Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) theory, psychological problems and behaviors associated with psychological defeat are not solely a result of external events but are also influenced by beliefs about these events, distorted perceptions, and irrational beliefs (Petrides et al., 2017). These irrational beliefs, in general, affect individuals' functioning by shaping patterns of emotional self-defeat. Such irrational beliefs are typically acquired during childhood through social learning and processes that individuals perceive as functional and protective, often facilitated through self-suggestion and repetition (Kaya et al., 2017; Oakey-Frost et al., 2022).

Psychological defeat can be described as "any intentional behavior with clear adverse effects on one's self or self-related activities, where individuals, following experiences of misfortune, find themselves compelled to view such misfortune as beyond their control" (Callan et al., 2014). It is also defined as "negative beliefs regarding an individual's capacity for success in carrying out self-directed actions, obstructing the initiation and participation in such behaviors" (Campellone et al., 2016). Additionally, Owen (2018) characterizes psychological defeat as a sensation of unsuccessful social conflict, where an individual feels trapped and incapable of escape, resulting in two distinct forms of conflict: internal, which involves an individual's thoughts and emotions, such as feelings of self-isolation, and external, which is related to the perception of being confined due to external events or surrounding circumstances.

The concept of psychological defeat is an expression of an individual's defeat by oneself, and the most perilous aspect of this state is that when a person is defeated by their self, they do not attempt to defend it (Al-Attar, 2019). In contrast, when others attempt to impose defeat upon them, the individual vigorously strives to confront and counter such attempts by others, thus causing more significant harm in the case of self-defeat. Azzazi & Ali (2020) described it as a psychological state manifested by the surrender of an individual's will and personal strength to oneself and others, the inability to confront life's challenges, aversion from present and future life activities, the detachment of the soul from what brings it joy, contentment, and serenity, and the belief in spiritual desolation, accompanied by feelings of insignificance, contempt, self-deprecation, and self-blame

Psychological defeat encompasses a collection of negative thoughts concerning an individual's ability to achieve their goals and excel in executing goal-directed behavior (Campellone et al., 2016). These thoughts hinder the initiation, engagement, and accomplishment of such behavior. Irrational beliefs, as a whole, affect individuals' functioning primarily through emotional self-defeat (Kaya et al., 2017). Furthermore, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) theory suggests that psychological problems and behaviors associated with psychological defeat are not solely triggered by external events but are influenced by beliefs about these events, distorted perceptions, and irrational beliefs (Petrides et al., 2017). Moreover, Ibrahim and Al-Shazly (2020) pointed out that self-defeat is a valid construct for predicting polarized thinking. Additionally, the results of a study by Azzazi and Ali (2020) demonstrated a statistically significant negative correlation between cognitive security and psychological defeat.

Individuals with psychological defeat exhibit several key characteristics, including feelings of

general fatigue, dependence on others, anticipation of harm and fear of the future, constant procrastination, negative self-perception, self-degradation, self-punishment, reluctance to take risks, loss of ambition and self-vitality, and existential emptiness, which encompasses feelings of general contamination, social alienation, depression, despair, and pessimism (Ibrahim and Al-Najjar, 2023). These characteristics manifest in feelings of exhaustion, psychological fatigue, dependence on others, fear of the future, and perpetual procrastination. Psychological defeat is often associated with a set of negative cognitive perceptions that collectively contribute to justifying feelings of incapacity within a framework of self-deception and self-deception of others (Kordel, 2012, Taylor et al., 2011).

Psychological defeat is a multidimensional concept, and its components can vary due to individual psychological and personality traits, as well as the surrounding environments and circumstances. Wei and Ku (2007) identified the following components: social self-efficacy and self-esteem, deep anxiety, and depression. Abdulsamad (2013) identified six components of psychological defeat, including willpower weakness, spiritual emptiness, self-contempt, surrender to defeat, psychological exhaustion, and self-humiliation. Abu Halawa (2012) identified six components: shame, self-neglect, pessimism, cognitive perceptions, lack of self-vitality, and self-punishment. Al-Shafie's study (2017) identified four components: spiritual emptiness, pessimism, meaninglessness, and self-deficit. Al-Obeidat and Abu Asaad's study (2017) focused on four components: approval addiction, love addiction, achievement and entitlement addiction, and self-blame. Almohtadi's study (2019) identified six components: guilt, withdrawal, self-humiliation, fear of failure, narcissism, and social isolation. Hasbullah's study (2020) found four components: willpower weakness, surrender, psychological exhaustion, and psychological resentment.

Azzazi and Ali's study (2020) identified four components: psychological breakdown, spiritual emptiness, loss of motivation, and hope in life, and self-humiliation. Khalaf and Khalif's study (2021) found five components: spiritual emptiness, self-neglect, cognitive perceptions, self-punishment, and lack of self-vitality. Ibn Yahya's study (2023) identified four components: shame, self-neglect, cognitive perceptions, and self-punishment. Building on the multiple components identified in previous research, this study relies on four specific components of psychological defeat to develop a measurement scale. These selected components are psychological debility, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-deficit. These components have been the most frequently mentioned, comprehensive, and suitable for the participants in this study, who are university students in the Saudi Arabian context.

Based on the researcher's experience in teaching university students, he observed signs of psychological defeat among certain students during discussions and dialogues on various issues. To validate these observations, the researcher conducted a survey study involving interviews with these students. Common characteristics were identified among them, including pessimism, withdrawal from volunteer work and community service, reluctance to attend training sessions, as well as feelings of frustration and hopelessness regarding certain social issues.

The current research has shed light on the detrimental consequences of psychological defeat among some young individuals. Abu Halawa (2012) pointed out that psychological defeat is more perilous than material defeat because it can lead to frustration and helplessness despite having qualifications and resources, even in the presence of opportunities for improvement. It poses a more significant threat to individuals and communities than all the weapons invented by humans in wars. This is because it leads to intellectual, cultural, and spiritual defeats and can

result in behaviors of despair and misery, ultimately leading to surrender. Psychological defeat negatively impacts various aspects of an individual's personality (Abdulsamad, 2013). The psychologically defeated person may experience intellectual and social withdrawal, becoming isolated and pessimistic. It can even affect their physical health, potentially leading to a condition referred to by heart doctors as "Broken Heart Syndrome" (Hasbullah, 2020).

While reviewing the existing literature in this field, the researcher noted the absence of research addressing the psychometric properties of the Psychological Defeat Scale among university students in the Saudi Arabian context. Therefore, the current research aims to uncover the components of the Psychological Defeat Scale among university students in the Saudi Arabian environment and to verify its psychometric properties, including validity, reliability, and internal consistency. This study also contributes to the Arabic literature by providing a Psychological Defeat Scale for the psychological and educational heritage, benefiting those interested in the educational process within the context of contemporary Arab society.

The main problem of this research is as follows: What are the psychometric properties of the Psychological Defeat Scale among university students? This central question leads to the following sub-questions:

1. What are the components of the Psychological Defeat Scale among university students?
2. Does the Psychological Defeat Scale in the current study demonstrate adequate internal consistency?
3. Does the Psychological Defeat Scale show acceptable validity measures?
4. Does the Psychological Defeat Scale exhibit reliable measures of reliability?

2. Methods

2.1. Methodology

To verify the hypotheses, the current research utilized the descriptive research methodology as it is deemed suitable for such studies. The aim is to construct the Psychological Defeat Scale, identify its components, and verify its psychometric properties in the Saudi Arabian context.

2.2. Sample Size

The research tool was administered to a sample of 376 students from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, with an average age of 19.78 years and a standard deviation of 1.63. The selection of participants was done randomly, and the primary objective was to assess the psychometric properties of the Psychological Defeat Scale.

2.3. Measurements

2.3.1. The Psychological Defeat Scale

The psychological defeat scale was developed by the researcher to measure psychological defeat among university students, the following components were identified according to their recurrence in previous studies and their suitability to the characteristics of the participants: psychological debility, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-deficit (Abu Halawa, 2012; Abdulsamad, 2013; Al-Obeidat & Abu Asaad, 2017; Almohtadi et al., 2019; Azzazi & Ali, 2020; Graham & Lyons, 2021; Sherman & David, 2006).

The initial version of the scale consisted of 24 items, distributed evenly among the four

components, with six items allocated to each component. All items are to be answered on a Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," scored on a scale of 1 to 5, respectively. Thus, the total score for the scale ranges from 24 to 120 points, where a higher score signifies a greater degree of psychological defeat. The upper quartile is determined by achieving a score of 90, representing participants in the main study, while the lower quartile corresponds to a score of 30.

The researcher presented the scale to five faculty members specializing in psychology and mental health. According to the researcher, the agreement percentages among the reviewers regarding the scale statements indicated that the statements were suitable for the nature and characteristics of the learners and were associated with the components of the scale. The instructions were clear, with agreement percentages ranging from 80% to 100%. Therefore, the Psychological Defeat Scale demonstrates high content validity.

2.4 Statistical Analysis

The investigation into the construct validity of the scale employed a split-sample approach, integrating Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The study exclusively enrolled participants with complete data across all scales, and the dataset underwent a randomized bifurcation into two distinct datasets, approximating a 50/50 split using the Random Sample of Cases function in SPSS. Subsequently, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on sub-sample 1 using SPSS version 26.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was required to be ≥ 0.8, and the significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.05$) was essential to ensure the appropriateness of factor analysis, as outlined by Field (2013). Factors were extracted using Kaiser's criterion (i.e., eigenvalues greater than 1) and subjected to rotation through the direct oblimin technique to facilitate factor correlation.

In parallel, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was executed on sub-sample 2 using Amos v.26, employing the model derived from the EFA. Maximum likelihood estimation was employed for testing the model. Goodness-of-fit indicators, including the model χ^2, root mean square of error approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI), were reported, following Kline (2015). Criteria for good model fit comprised a non-significant model $\chi^2/df \leq 3.0$, RMSEA ≤ 0.08, TLI ≥ 0.95, GFI ≥ 0.95, and CFI ≥ 0.95, aligning with the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999). Construct reliability was assessed to evaluate the consistency of indicator variables in measuring latent variables. A construct reliability value exceeding 0.7 indicated the reliability of the indicator variable, following Purwanto et al. (2021).

3. Results

3.1. The Scale Internal Consistency

To ascertain the degree of association between the individual scores of each item and the overall score of the respective dimension it assesses, the Pearson's correlation coefficient was employed. Specifically, this coefficient was calculated for each item's score concerning the total score of the corresponding dimension. Furthermore, the correlation between each dimension and the total score of the entire scale was determined. The following table presents a depiction of the internal consistency of the Psychological Defeat Scale.

Table 1: Internal Consistency for Psychological Defeat Scale.

Item	Corr. with dimension	Item	Corr. with dimension	Item	Corr. with dimension	Item	Corr. with dimension
	Psychological debility		Self-contempt		Spiritual emptiness		Self-deficit
1	0.628**	7	0.555**	13	0.548**	19	0.515**
2	0.647**	8	0.631**	14	0.582**	20	0.688**
3	0.631**	9	0.635**	15	0.672**	21	0.669**
4	0.598**	10	0.635**	16	0.547**	22	0.618**
5	0.643**	11	0.654**	17	0.566**	23	0.576**
6	0.582**	12	0.510**	18	0.566**	24	0.628**
	Corr. With Scale = 0.619**		Corr. With Scale = 0.552**		Corr. With Scale = 0.580**		Corr. With Scale = 0.633**

The previous table indicates that all correlation coefficient values are significant at the 0.01 level, confirming the internal consistency of the items with their respective dimensions. This implies that the scale, in general, exhibits good internal consistency and can be relied upon.

3.2. The Scale Construct Validity

To establish the construct validity of the Psychological Defeat Scale, both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were undertaken using a total sample of 376 students. The sample was randomly partitioned into two equal groups, each comprising 188 students. Exploratory factor analysis was applied to one group, while confirmatory factor analysis was executed on the other group. The subsequent presentation outlines the outcomes derived from both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses for the Psychological Defeat Scale.

3.2.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Principal Axis Factoring method was employed for the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Bartlett's test resulted in a value of 969.324 with 276 degrees of freedom, indicating statistical significance at the 0.01 level. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test value was 0.848, surpassing the threshold of 0.8, indicating acceptability. Factors with eigenvalues greater than one were retained and items were considered loaded on a factor if their loading exceeded 0.3. Consequently, four factors were extracted, elucidating 62.21% of the total variance of the scale. Promax rotation was applied, and the following table presents the factor loadings of the items on the rotated factors.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis for Psychological Defeatism Scale.

Items	Factors				Communalities
	1	2	3	4	
1	0.351	0.664	0.263	0.086	0.641
2	0.334	0.743	0.207	0.204	0.748
3	0.236	0.553	0.379	0.167	0.533
4	0.146	0.564	0.396	0.194	0.534
5	0.307	0.767	0.250	0.016	0.745
6	0.007	0.664	0.296	0.383	0.675
7	0.250	0.248	0.603	0.165	0.515
8	0.355	0.323	0.629	0.177	0.657
9	0.364	0.269	0.698	0.027	0.693
10	0.175	0.261	0.656	0.262	0.598
11	0.371	0.342	0.605	0.119	0.635
12	0.229	0.190	0.529	0.098	0.378
13	0.247	0.306	0.215	0.548	0.501
14	0.416	0.088	0.269	0.661	0.690
15	0.142	0.089	0.103	0.804	0.685
16	0.210	0.249	0.219	0.726	0.681
17	0.365	0.222	0.231	0.594	0.589
18	0.347	0.238	0.160	0.642	0.615
19	0.742	0.020	0.221	0.172	0.629
20	0.720	0.220	0.400	0.228	0.779
21	0.634	0.424	0.071	0.255	0.652
22	0.726	0.164	0.301	0.194	0.682
23	0.520	0.259	0.389	0.068	0.493
24	0.682	0.216	0.064	0.259	0.583
Eigenvalue	4.233	3.752	3.601	3.345	Total Variance
% Variance	17.64%	15.63%	15.01%	13.94%	62.21%

From the preceding table, it is evident that:

- Items 19 to 24 were more loaded on the first factor, with an eigenvalue of 4.233 and a variance explained of 17.64%. Examining the content of these items reveals that they address the dimension of self-helplessness.
- Items 1 to 6 were more loaded on the second factor, with an eigenvalue of 3.752 and a variance explained of 15.63%. A closer look at the content of these items indicates that they pertain to the dimension of psychological fatigue.
- Items 7 to 12 were more loaded on the third factor, with an eigenvalue of 3.601 and a variance explained of 15.01%. Analyzing the content of these items reveals that they relate to the dimension of self-contempt.
- Items 13 to 18 were more loaded on the fourth factor, with an eigenvalue of 3.345 and a variance explained of 13.94%. Reviewing the content of these items shows that they address the dimension of spiritual emptiness.

2.3.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The confirmatory factor analysis for the Psychological Defeat Scale was conducted using the diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS) method, given its suitability for Likert-type data. The measurement model for the Psychological Defeat Scale, consisting of 24 items distributed across four dimensions, was tested. The following table illustrates the values of goodness-of-fit indices for the confirmatory factor analysis model of the Psychological Defeat Scale:

Table 3: Model Fit Statistics for Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Psychological Defeatism Scale.

Fit Statistics	Cut Off Criterion	Obtained
χ^2	—	610.72
df	—	246
χ^2/df	≤ 3.0	2.48
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.953
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.951
GFI	≥ 0.95	0.950
IFI	≥ 0.95	0.954
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.064

From the previous table, it is evident that the goodness-of-fit indices were good and fell within acceptable limits, indicating the congruence of the measurement model with the actual data. The following table illustrates the factor loadings and their statistical significance for the items of the Psychological Defeat Scale according to the confirmatory factor analysis model:

Table 4: Standardized Estimates for Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Psychological Defeatism Scale.

| Item	Standardized Est	Std. Error	Z value	Sig.	Item	Standardized Est	Std. Error	Z value	Sig.
	Psychological debility					Spiritual emptiness			
1	0.802	0.091	11.14	<0.001	13	0.648	0.098	8.17	<0.001
2	0.807	0.087	11.24	<0.001	14	0.698	0.077	9.01	<0.001
3	0.802	0.093	11.13	<0.001	15	0.500	0.106	5.98	<0.001
4	0.758	0.086	10.25	<0.001	16	0.633	0.084	7.93	<0.001
5	0.783	0.099	10.74	<0.001	17	0.830	0.090	11.54	<0.001
6	0.739	0.089	9.89	<0.001	18	0.709	0.089	9.20	<0.001
	Self-contempt					Self-deficit			
7	0.723	0.085	9.64	<0.001	19	0.645	0.102	8.31	<0.001
8	0.796	0.085	11.04	<0.001	20	0.880	0.077	12.97	<0.001
9	0.775	0.084	10.62	<0.001	21	0.847	0.083	12.18	<0.001
10	0.847	0.094	12.15	<0.001	22	0.789	0.087	10.93	<0.001
11	0.810	0.092	11.35	<0.001	23	0.734	0.100	9.86	<0.001
12	0.596	0.107	7.51	<0.001	24	0.784	0.080	10.82	<0.001
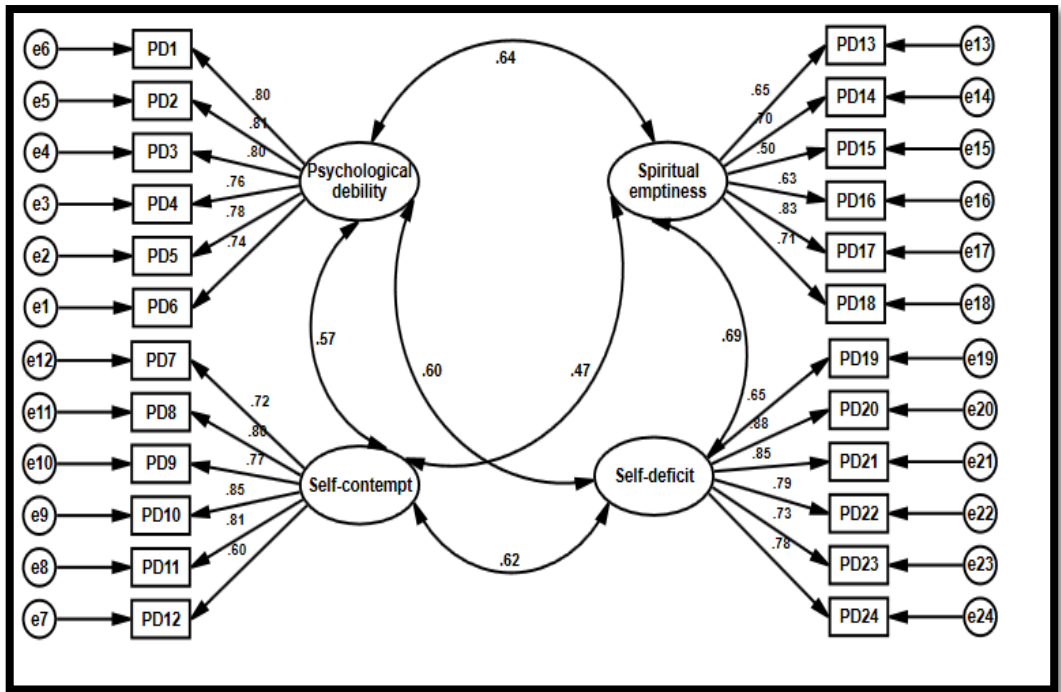
Fig. 4: Measurement Model (with Standardized Estimate) for Psychological Defeatism Scale.

From the previous table, it is evident that all factor loadings were greater than 0.4 and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, confirming the construct validity of the Psychological Defeat Scale.

3.2.3. Discriminant Validity

The assessment of Discriminant Validity through Known-Groups Validity involves a comparison between distinct groups, specifically the upper category (top 25%) and lower category (bottom 25%) of individuals within the sample. This comparison is based on the total scores derived from the survey scale. The ensuing table provides a visual representation of this comparative analysis.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity for the Psychological Defeatism Scale.

Dimension	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t value	Sig.
Psychological debility	Upper	47	17.98	5.42	92	14.59	<0.001
	Lower	47	6.32	0.78			
Self-contempt	Upper	47	17.79	5.68	92	13.51	<0.001
	Lower	47	6.47	0.86			
Spiritual emptiness	Upper	47	15.81	5.15	92	12.37	<0.001
	Lower	47	6.36	0.92			
Self-deficit	Upper	47	17.28	5.42	92	13.89	<0.001
	Lower	47	6.21	0.62			
Total scale	Upper	47	68.85	16.66	92	17.81	<0.001
	Lower	47	25.36	1.55			

The previous table shows that all "t" values are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating the discriminant validity of the Psychological Defeat Scale. This confirms its suitability for application.

3.3. Scale Reliability

3.3.1. Cronbach's Alpha

To ensure the reliability of the psychological defeat scale, the Cronbach's alpha equation was used. The reliability of the scale was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha equation, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 6: Reliability Coefficients for the Psychological Defeatism Scale.

Dimension	Reliability
	Cronbach's alpha
Psychological debility	0.736
Self-contempt	0.810
Spiritual emptiness	0.740
Self-deficit	0.766

The previous table indicates that the values of the stability coefficients were all greater than 0.7, indicating the stability of the psychological defeat scale.

3.3.2. Composite Reliability (CR)

The composite reliability coefficients (CR) were calculated, where composite reliability is defined as the ratio of true variance to total variance. The calculation of the composite reliability coefficient was based on the following equation (Kline, 2015, p. 313):

$$CR = \frac{\left(\sum \lambda_i\right)^2}{\left(\sum \lambda_i\right)^2 + \left(\sum \epsilon_i\right)}$$

Where

- $(CR\backslash)$ is the Composite Reliability coefficient,
- $(\lambda\_i\backslash)$ represents the standardized regression weights (saturated loadings from the confirmatory factor analysis),
- $(\epsilon\_i\backslash)$ is the standard error.

Table 6: Reliability Coefficients for the Psychological Defeatism Scale.

Dimension	Reliability
	Composite reliability (CR)
Psychological debility	0.904
Self-contempt	0.892
Spiritual emptiness	0.832
Self-deficit	0.904

It is evident from Table (6) that all the Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients for the Psychological Defeat Scale were greater than 0.7, indicating the construct's good reliability.

4. Discussion

The findings of this current study affirm the validity of the Psychological Defeat Scale in gauging psychological defeat among university students. The factor analysis unveiled four distinct components within the scale, namely psychological debility, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-deficit. Notably, the scale demonstrated a commendable level of internal consistency, reliability, and overall validity, underscoring its trustworthiness. These results are consistent with some aspects of previous studies, although variations in the number and nature of identified components exist across different studies (Abdul Samad, 2013; Abu Halawa & Rizk, 2013; Al-Obeidat & Abu Asaad, 2017; Almohtadi et al, 2019; Azzazi & Ali, 2020; Hasaballah, 2020; Ibn Yehia, 2023; Khlaif & Khalif, 2021; Graham & Lyons, 2021; Al Shafei, 2017; Wei & Ku, 2007; Taylor et al., 2011; Trasafi et al., 2015).

The psychological defeat is thus understood as a multi-component concept. In this research, the researcher relies on four components of psychological defeat, upon which a scale for measuring psychological defeat was developed. These components include psychological debility, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-deficit. These components are the most recurrent, comprehensive, and suitable for the participants in the study.

The researcher believes that these four components are the same as those found in previous studies, and they stand out for being more comprehensive and in line with the characteristics of the research sample. The research sample shares similar psychological and cognitive characteristics experienced by university students, without differentiation between males and females.

In light of the above, it is evident that the current Psychological Defeat Scale is capable of detecting the level of psychological defeat among university students. The scale's reliability confirms the quality of its content in measuring psychological defeat. Moreover, it exhibits discriminant validity, distinguishing between the four components of psychological defeat (psychological weariness, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-incapacitation). The researcher verified the construct validity of the scale using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.

Additionally, the scale demonstrated discriminant validity through pairwise comparison (distinctive validity), with all values being statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This affirms the construct and discriminant validity of the Psychological Defeat Scale, highlighting its suitability for application. Regarding the scale's reliability, the results indicated that the stability coefficients, using both Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability, ranged from 0.736 to 0.904. This high stability rate confirms that the scale components exhibit reliability in measuring psychological defeat components.

In light of the research findings, the Psychological Defeat Scale among university students in the Saudi Arabian context exhibits high psychometric indicators, enabling its use and application to any sample of university students. The scale can be utilized to assess the extent of psychological defeat levels among students. Through the use of the current scale, educational stakeholders can identify the level of psychological defeat among students. Consequently, efforts can be directed towards reducing psychological defeat levels among university students in the Saudi Arabian context. This involves focusing attention on creating an educational environment that addresses students' psychological defeat effectively.

5. Limitations

While the developed psychological defeat scale demonstrates robust psychometric properties and utility for assessing psychological defeat among university students in the Saudi Arabian context, there are certain limitations to consider. First, the generalizability of the findings may be constrained due to the specific cultural and contextual characteristics of the sample, potentially limiting the applicability of the scale to different cultural settings. Additionally, the reliance on self-report measures, as is common in psychological research, introduces the possibility of response bias or social desirability, impacting the accuracy of participants' responses. Moreover, the study's cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of psychological defeat at a particular point in time, making it challenging to establish causal relationships or capture changes over an extended period. Future research could benefit from longitudinal designs and diverse samples to enhance the scale's robustness and applicability across various cultural and educational contexts.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, this study has effectively designed and validated a Psychological Defeat Scale tailored to assess the psychological defeat experienced by university students in the specific context of Saudi Arabia. The scale, comprising four components (psychological exhaustion, self-contempt, spiritual emptiness, and self-helplessness), demonstrated robust psychometric properties, including high reliability, validity, and discriminative capability. These findings contribute to the expanding body of literature on psychological defeat, offering a culturally pertinent instrument for measuring this phenomenon among university students.

The study concluded with significant insights and recommendations for addressing psychological defeat among university students. The introduced scale presents a valuable tool for application in educational settings, facilitating the prompt identification and support of students grappling with elevated levels of psychological defeat. Future research endeavors should consider adopting longitudinal designs to capture the dynamic nature of this phenomenon, while cross-cultural validations are imperative to ensure the scale's relevance across diverse contexts. The implementation of targeted intervention programs, exploration of individual scale components and collaboration with educational authorities stand out as crucial steps toward establishing a comprehensive approach to student well-being. By heeding these recommendations, institutions can foster a positive learning environment conducive to resilience and academic success.

Acknowledgment

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