

THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PAIN TOLERANCE, ANGER RUMINATION, AND AUTISTIC TRAITS IN DETERMINING SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR IN MEDICAL STUDENTS

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: Medical students are reported to have higher estimated rates of suicide attempts compared with the general population, highlighting the need for studies examining suicide-related risk factors in this group. Autistic traits have been associated with suicidality among medical students; however, psychological pain/psychache—a construct with strong explanatory value for suicidality—and tolerance for mental pain have not been sufficiently examined regarding autistic traits and anger rumination. We aimed to evaluate the relationship between psychache and tolerance for mental pain, autistic characteristics, and anger rumination in medical students.

METHODS: This cross-sectional study was conducted between December 2025 and January 2026 and included medical students aged 18–30 years. Sociodemographic Data Form, Orbach and Mikulincer Mental Pain Scale–8 (OMMP-8), Tolerance for Mental Pain Scale–10 (TMPS-10), Anger Rumination Scale (ARS) and Adult Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ) were administered as online questionnaires. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 25. Ethical committee approval was obtained from the Kırıkkale University Non-Interventional

Research Ethics Committee at its meeting dated 14.01.2026, numbered 2026/01, with decision number 2025.12.42.

RESULTS: The presence of psychiatric disorder is 8,4%, 10,2% had history of psychiatric disorder and 2,7% history of suicide attempts. There is a positive correlation between ARS and AQ scores ($r=0.185$, $p<0.001$). OMMP-8 scores are negatively correlated with TMPS-10 at a low-to-moderate level ($r=-0.447$, $p<0.001$), positively correlated with ARS at a moderate level ($r=0.581$, $p<0.001$) and AQ at a low level ($r=0.247$, $p<0.001$). TMPS-10 scores are negatively correlated at a low level with both ARS and AQ (AQ: $r=-0.224$, $p<0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS: Increased autistic traits and anger rumination are associated with increased psychache and decreased tolerance for mental pain. Our results highlight the importance of early identification of suicidal risk factors such as autistic traits and anger rumination in medical students. Our results provide a scientific basis for developing intervention programs for suicide among medical students.

Keywords: Tolerance for psychological pain, psychological pain, psychache, anger rumination, autistic traits