

# Resilience And Inclusion at Universities in Germany - Interaction of Personal Resources of Students with Physical Disabilities with Social and Structural Framework Conditions

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## Abstract

For students with functional impairments, managing their studies can be difficult by structural, social and personal barriers. Accordingly, universities must provide equal opportunities for access and study conditions. In addition to didactic and communicative resources, resilience factors play a central role. Which resources are available to help students with disabilities manage their studies? How do they interact with social factors and inclusive framework conditions? A mixed-methods design was chosen: 1) a framework model of inclusion and resilience has been created, which describes how exclusionary framework conditions trigger stress reactions that vary depending on the appraisal and resilience of students with disabilities, and forms the theoretical framework for classifying and presenting the interplay of inclusion and resilience. The results of 2) the interviews and 3) the nominal focus group provide information about the barriers and resources most relevant from the students' perspective as experts in their own right. The additional effort required due to their disability and physical barriers were cited. Many already experienced discrimination and described a lack of awareness and information, while fewer experiences of inclusion could be analyzed. Social support, primarily from family and friends, as well as university services and facilities, were most frequently mentioned as resources. Experiences of exclusion trigger stress reactions that vary depending on how they are perceived and the students' resilience. Students primarily perceive challenges on a social and structural level that make it difficult to cope with their studies, suggesting that more inclusive framework conditions could positively influence individual coping mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Accessibility; Coping Strategies; Inclusive Higher Education; Social Support; Studying with Impairments