



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effect of a Counseling Program Based On the Use of Stress-Coping Strategies in Improving the Level of Life Satisfaction among Students

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Sep 12, 2024 Accepted: Nov 8, 2024	The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a counseling program designed to train high school students in using positive strategies to cope with psychological stress and the positive impact this training has on enhancing their sense of life satisfaction. This field study applied an experimental approach on a sample of 34 high school students, divided equally between the experimental and control groups, from a high school in the Wilaya of El Oued. The pre-test showed that these students scored the lowest on the Life Satisfaction Scale by Magdy Mohamed El-Desouky (1996) and the highest on the Stressful Life Events Scale by Zeinab Mahmoud Shuqair (2001) (indicating high levels of psychological stress and low levels of life satisfaction). By using the "T-test" to study differences between paired and unpaired sample means for two equal samples, the study arrived at the following results:
Keywords Counseling program Stress-coping strategies Life satisfaction Students	
*Corresponding Author: lacheheb-asma@univ-eloued.dz	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statistically significant differences were found between the pre-test and post-test measurements of psychological stress and life satisfaction levels among members of the experimental group.• Statistically significant differences were observed between the experimental and control groups in the post-test measurements of psychological stress levels, favoring the control group.• Statistically significant differences were observed between the experimental and control groups in the post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels, favoring the experimental group.

INTRODUCTION

Every society is characterized by its unique identity, which differentiates it from others. This identity, shaped through history, forms a way of life and a shared language of understanding among its members. Education serves as a structured practice within society to ensure its continuity by reinforcing and upholding its values and orientations on one hand, and fostering change according to specific ideologies and views about humanity and life, which ensures development in harmony with the advancements of the world on the other. Both aspects affirm the close connection between education and the society's conditions and objectives.

Economic and social development is tied to scientific and technological advancement, which, in turn, is dependent on qualified human resources capable of productivity and the construction and evolution of material civilization. Thus, through its institutions and programs, education aims to provide human resources capable of shouldering the responsibility of implementing development plans and adapting to changes by equipping them with the knowledge and skills that aid in making appropriate decisions and adapting to environmental demands. This approach allows them to achieve psychological and social harmony and enjoy mental health, which is essential for individual productivity.

To achieve this goal, educational institutions, in their efforts to enhance their outcomes and provide society with future cadres capable of propelling comprehensive national development, are required to offer guidance services that help students solve their problems, avoid many psychological and behavioral disturbances, and attain a minimum level of life satisfaction.

1.1- Research Problem:

The concept of life satisfaction is essential to an individual's well-being and mental health, as it reflects how individuals subjectively evaluate various aspects of their lives. Life satisfaction is also an indicator of mental health, positively correlating with self-esteem. Conversely, dissatisfaction with life negatively affects an individual's personality, adaptability, and relationships (Shaqoura, 2012, pp. 3-4); a lack of life satisfaction fosters a sense of frustration, rendering individuals vulnerable to psychological disorders.

Psychological and behavioral issues faced by today's youth and the resulting risks have become significant concerns for both the public and private spheres. These issues are not merely threats to individuals or groups; they continue to escalate and grow more complex over time. Despite ongoing efforts to combat them, these issues remain a danger that threatens the continuity of societies and nations. Researchers agree that Arab youth today experience a crisis termed "the change crisis," facing many negative phenomena within a social environment marked by foreign values, cultural contradictions, economic instability, and poverty (Helles & Mahdi, 2010, p.149; Jam et al., 2011). Studies also agree that increased economic, social, emotional, academic, and health problems make individuals less capable of meeting life's demands and add to their burdens, heightening anxiety and stress. This situation contributes to increased psychological pressure and a feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction with life, posing a problem for this generation of youth. Such dissatisfaction represents a starting point for many issues that deplete young people's potential, exposing them to risks of deviation (Shaqoura, 2012, p.03; Abdullah et al., 2024).

Studies have shown variability among individuals in the intensity of stress and tension experienced when facing a problem or situation, a variation attributed to self-assessment of the situation, sources of self-support, and coping strategies (Al-Birqdar, 2011, p. 29). Bandura affirms that individuals differ in handling stressful situations and coping with the psychological pressures that arise depending on their self-efficacy, which is determined by the effort exerted and the duration they persevere in facing obstacles (Al Daham, 2013, p.876). This has led research in psychological stress to focus on positive personality traits and variables that contribute to maintaining physical and mental health, as seen in studies such as Janelyn and Blarney's, which examined the relationship between social support and resilience, determining which plays a more significant role in alleviating life stress (Al-Abdali, 2012, p.08).

Thus, many researchers have recently focused on studying stressful life events that cause psychological pressure and exploring coping methods and techniques individuals use to confront and adapt to these situations, aiming to achieve a satisfactory level of life satisfaction (Awda, 2010, p.02; Al-Qadri et al., 2023). They found that the behavior of dealing with these situations is an adaptive,

learned behavior aimed at solving and overcoming stressful situations, thereby avoiding the psychological pressure associated with them (Al-Banna, 2008, p.134; Al-khresheh et al., 2023).

Since educational institutions, in their diversity, strive to impart knowledge and prepare students to become individuals who feel life satisfaction, enjoy mental health, and contribute to the development of their societies, these institutions are responsible for developing strategies to achieve this goal by utilizing psychological guidance and counseling services.

Based on these considerations, the research question was formulated as follows: Can a cognitive-behavioral counseling program to train students in using positive strategies to cope with psychological stress improve their sense of life satisfaction?

1.2- Study Hypotheses:

A hypothesis is a provisional solution that is tested through scientific methodology. The study hypotheses were formulated as follows:

1. There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of psychological stress levels among members of the experimental group, favoring the pre-test.
2. There are no statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of psychological stress levels among members of the control group.
3. There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels among members of the experimental group, favoring the post-test.
4. There are no statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels among members of the control group.
5. There are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the post-test measurements of psychological stress levels, favoring the control group.
6. There are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels, favoring the experimental group.

1.3- Study Objectives:

The study aimed to:

- Assess the levels of psychological stress and life satisfaction among a sample of high school students.
- Develop a counseling program to enhance life satisfaction among students.
- Equip members of the experimental group with positive skills and strategies to cope with psychological stress.
- Improve the level of life satisfaction among members of the experimental group.

1.4- Study Significance:

The significance of the study stems from:

- The focus on psychological stress, a topic of interest to many researchers and those concerned with individual mental health, especially students. This significance is amplified by the challenges facing the educational system and the pressures imposed by successive

reforms on both teachers and students, highlighting the importance of students acquiring coping strategies.

- Emphasizing the relationship between psychological stress and the feeling of life satisfaction.
- Drawing the attention of educational authorities to the importance of school counseling and guidance services in maintaining students' mental health, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of school outcomes.

1.5- Study Concepts:

1.5.1- Life Satisfaction:

- Diener et al. (2003) suggest that assessing the level of life satisfaction depends on an individual's comparison of their circumstances with an ideal level they envision for their life. This ideal level serves as a standard for mental health, as it reflects personal judgment rather than specific characteristics deemed important (Abdel-Qawi, 2013, p. 09).
- Al-Deeb (1988) views life satisfaction as an individual's acceptance of themselves and their lifestyle within their immediate environment. It reflects harmony with oneself, one's faith, and family, along with happiness in studies or work, acceptance of friends, contentment with past achievements, optimism about the future, and control over one's environment as a decision-maker capable of achieving goals (Hijazi, 2007, p.267).
- Based on the above, life satisfaction can be defined as the way individuals assess their lives from their subjective viewpoints. This assessment touches on two aspects: the first is cognitive, involving the individual's awareness and general evaluation of their life or specific aspects of it. The second aspect involves evaluating life in terms of the frequency of pleasant or unpleasant events.
- It is worth noting that life satisfaction does not imply submission or resignation but rather a realistic perception of life, events, and situations, acknowledging that certain things can be controlled while others cannot, necessitating adaptation.

Operational Definition of Life Satisfaction:

Life satisfaction is defined as the assessment made by the student sample regarding the quality of their life, based on their personal judgment using criteria they have selected themselves, focusing on cognitive aspects and future aspirations. This assessment is based on the student's comparison of their living conditions with the optimal level they believe is suitable for their life. It includes aspects such as happiness, sociability, tranquility, psychological stability, social appreciation, and contentment. This is measured by the score the student sample achieves on the Life Satisfaction Scale developed by Magdy El-Dessouky (1996), as used in this study.

1.5.2- Coping Strategies for Psychological Stress:

Interest in studying coping strategies for psychological stress began nearly four decades ago, though there is no universally agreed-upon definition. Despite differing definitions, there is consensus that individuals use coping strategies to adapt to psychological stress. These strategies consist of behavioral and cognitive patterns that individuals employ to cope psychologically, aiming to solve or mitigate their problems and resolve internal conflicts. The effectiveness of these strategies depends on an individual's proficiency and flexibility in using them, with success inferred from the outcomes they produce.

Researchers have classified coping strategies into positive strategies, such as logical analysis of stressful situations, positive reevaluation, seeking information, requesting assistance, and problem-solving directly to address crises. Negative strategies include avoidance (cognitive disengagement), surrender, self-blame (taking responsibility for the problem), seeking alternative rewards, generating new sources of satisfaction, and adapting without addressing the original problem.

Clearly, an individual's success in handling psychological stress imposed by social situations depends on their choice and mastery of positive coping strategies. Conversely, failure to employ these strategies or reliance on negative coping strategies can lead to anxiety, stress, and psychological disturbances. Coping strategies are defined as "a set of techniques that leverage an individual's psychological resources toward managing stressful events and fulfilling their demands" (Hassan & Salem, 2022, p. 139). These strategies fall into two categories: problem-focused strategies and emotion-focused strategies.

Operational Definition of Coping Strategies for Psychological Stress:

In this study, coping strategies are operationally defined as problem-focused approaches that directly target the issue by identifying it, generating alternative solutions, evaluating the effectiveness and consequences of these solutions, and selecting the optimal one, thereby enabling the student to change the problem directly. Emotion-focused coping, on the other hand, involves regulating emotional responses by shifting from a sense of threat to one of challenge, focusing on positive aspects and re-evaluating the situation positively. This is measured by the score the student achieves on Zeinab Shuqair's (2001) scale, used in this study.

Cognitive-Behavioral Counseling:

Cognitive-behavioral counseling focuses on the cognitive and emotional aspects of the individual within their social context, employing cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and environmental strategies to effect targeted changes.

METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS:

2.1- Study Methodology:

The study used the experimental method, which aims to establish the cause-and-effect relationship between phenomena or variables. The independent variable in this study was the counseling program, which was observed for its effect on reducing psychological stress and improving life satisfaction, the dependent variables.

2.2- Study Population:

The Stressful Life Events Scale and Life Satisfaction Scale were applied to 300 randomly selected high school students from a secondary school in the Wilaya of El Oued, Algeria. Out of these, 41 students who scored the lowest in life satisfaction and the highest in stressful life events, as per the scales used in the study, were chosen. Seven students were excluded to maintain sample homogeneity.

2.3- Study Sample:

The primary study was conducted on 34 students (16 female and 18 male) selected through the previously mentioned method. These students were randomly divided into two equal groups: one control group and one experimental group. The homogeneity of the groups was ensured by

examining differences in pre-test scores for psychological stress and life satisfaction, as well as gender, academic achievement, age, family socioeconomic and cultural level, and residential area.

2.4- Data Collection Tools:

To collect data for this study, the Life Satisfaction Scale by Magdy El-Dessouky and the Stressful Life Events Scale by Zeinab Mahmoud Shuqair were used, as both align with the operational definitions of terms in the current study and were previously applied to similar samples and environments. Additionally, a cognitive-behavioral counseling program was developed for the study.

2.4.1- Life Satisfaction Scale:

Developed by Magdy El-Dessouky (1996), this scale consists of 30 items distributed across six dimensions: happiness, sociability, tranquility, psychological stability, social appreciation, and contentment. A higher score indicates a higher level of life satisfaction. The scale's validity was verified through internal consistency, with construct validity calculated by examining the correlations between the scale items, dimensions, and the overall scale, all of which were significant. Both discriminant and experimental validity were established using three distinct samples. Reliability was confirmed through test-retest, split-half reliability, and Cronbach's alpha, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.69 to 0.93.

2.4.2- Stressful Life Events Scale:

Created by Zeinab Shuqair (2001), this scale contains 70 items covering seven subscales representing sources of stress: family, economic, academic, social, emotional, health, and personal. Each source has ten statements describing it. The validity was assessed using internal consistency, with correlation coefficients between 0.23 and 0.88, as well as the extreme-groups comparison method. Reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and split-half methods, with reliability coefficients ranging from 0.77 to 0.89.

2.4.3- Cognitive-Behavioral Counseling Program:

Based on a review of theoretical literature and existing counseling programs in the Arab context, a cognitive-behavioral group counseling program was developed. To ensure its suitability, it was reviewed by 11 experts in psychology and experienced school counseling and guidance specialists. The program consists of 12 sessions, each lasting one hour, except for the final session, which lasted 90 minutes.

2.5- Statistical Methods:

The study utilized the *t-test* for paired means and the *t-test* for two equal and independent sample means to examine the significance of differences in the sample scores. These tests were chosen as they are the most suitable for analyzing the study's quantitative data and verifying its hypotheses.

STUDY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Using data collection tools and after statistical analysis, the study reached the following findings:

3.1- Presentation and Discussion of the First Hypothesis Results:

The first hypothesis stated: "There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of psychological stress levels among members of the experimental group, favoring the pre-test."

Table (01): Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Experimental Group Members in the Pre-Test and Post-Test for Psychological Stress.

Psychological Stress	Pre-Test	Post-Test	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.01	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	17	4.35	2.1	Significant	In Favor of the Pre-Test
Mean (M)	94.35	67.11					
Standard Deviation (SD)	6.34	23.04					

It is evident from the table above that the calculated t value (4.35) is greater than the tabulated value (2.1), leading to the acceptance of the hypothesis. This result suggests that students' use of positive coping strategies provided in the counseling program helped reduce the intensity of their psychological stress. This finding aligns with the results of Zaki and Abdel Fadel's (1998) study, conducted on 138 teachers in Egypt, which highlighted a statistically significant positive relationship between ineffective coping strategies (such as anxiety, stress reduction, problem avoidance, and self-blame) and burnout. Additionally, there was a significant negative correlation between effective coping strategies (focusing on problem-solving, hard work and achievement, turning to friends, seeking spiritual support, and focusing on positives) and burnout, to the extent that it was possible to predict teachers' psychological stress based on strategies like anxiety, self-blame, and hard work and achievement (Dardeer, 2007, pp. 70–71).

Similarly, the study by Hains and Szyiakowski (1990) found that training programs for youth on identifying knowledge related to stress and using cognitive restructuring to develop adaptive thoughts and self-learning were effective in reducing psychological stress levels (Al-Madhoun, 2009, p. 4). Counseling programs, thanks to their unique activities and strategies, effectively train individuals to use positive coping strategies and enhance their ability to realistically assess stressful situations. This allows them to perceive these situations as less threatening, helping them reconstruct their understanding of these events. All of this indicates that an individual capable of this task possesses a high level of self-confidence, which enhances psychological resilience, making them less susceptible to psychological stress. Hanton states that "an individual with psychological resilience effectively uses assessment and coping strategies" (Al-Abdali, 2012, p. 09).

3.2- Presentation and Discussion of the Second Hypothesis Results:

The second hypothesis states: "There are no statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of psychological stress levels among members of the control group."

Table (02): Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Control Group Members in the Pre-Test and Post-Test for Psychological Stress.

Psychological Stress	Pre-Test	Post-Test	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.05	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	17	0.25	2.1	Not Significant	/

Mean (M)	92.11	91.52					
Standard Deviation (SD)	8.10	6.44					

It is observed from Table (02) that the calculated *t* value (0.25) is smaller than the tabulated value (2.1), indicating that the observed differences between the mean scores of the control group members in the pre-test and post-test for psychological stress are not statistically significant. This result suggests the negative impact of isolating the control group from the counseling program provided to their peers in the experimental group. While the mean scores of the experimental group decreased from (94.35) to (67.11) as shown in Table (01), the mean scores of the control group remained nearly constant (92.11, 91.52), as shown in Table (02).

The study by Coccofoman Dona et al. (2003) emphasized the importance of psychological counseling and social support in reducing psychological stress. Their study on 94 university students revealed that "students who scored high on the social support scale exhibited strong character, self-confidence, and the ability to cope with stress" (Abdel-Qawi, 2013, p. 12).

This result can be explained by the fact that the cognitive-behavioral counseling program provided students in the experimental group with positive strategies to cope with stress, such as logical analysis of stressful situations, positive reevaluation, and reconstructing situations positively to make appropriate decisions for problem-solving. These strategies are classified as complex thinking strategies, as they require using higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, induction, and deduction (Al-Shahri, 1429 AH, p. 35). Empirical evidence has shown that the development of these skills does not occur in isolation from stimuli and motivations that promote growth. For example, Al-Mufti's (1974) study concluded that the intervention applied to the experimental group led to a noticeable growth in inferential thinking skills (induction, deduction, inference) compared to their counterparts in the control group (Al-Otaibi, 2001, p. 43).

3.3- Presentation and Discussion of the Third Hypothesis Results:

The third hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels among members of the experimental group, favoring the post-test."

Table (03): Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Experimental Group Members in the Pre-Test and Post-Test for Life Satisfaction.

Life Satisfaction	Pre-Test	Post-Test	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.01	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	17	11.58	2.1	Significant	In Favor of the Post-Test
Mean (M)	39.41	76.41					
Standard Deviation (SD)	8.66	13.86					

The table, through the use of the *t*-test, confirms the validity of this hypothesis. The result indicates an improvement in life satisfaction levels among the experimental group students who benefited from the counseling program, with their mean score increasing from 39.41 in the pre-test to 76.41 in the post-test, a statistically significant difference of 37 points.

This suggests that the counseling program helped students recognize the importance of positive self-talk, distinguishing between rational and irrational thoughts, and the negative impact of the latter on

their lives. Training in relaxation techniques and skills also aided them in gaining insight and making realistic, logical decisions with the flexibility needed to adapt to environmental demands, thus boosting their self-confidence, which positively impacted their level of life satisfaction. Denis (2006), in his study on 492 American university students, found a strong correlation between self-confidence, decision-making ability, and life satisfaction (Al-Madhoun, 2009, p. 06).

The cognitive-behavioral counseling approach used in the program played a significant role in improving life satisfaction among the experimental group members, as it employs cognitive and emotional techniques that helped them overcome irrational and incorrect beliefs that caused behavioral and personality disturbances. By replacing these with more rational and logical beliefs, students were better able to adapt to their school and social environments, leading to greater satisfaction.

The program's reliance on behavioral techniques alongside cognitive methods enabled participants to discard certain incorrect behaviors or replace them with more appropriate ones learned throughout the program sessions. Studies, including Maali's (1986) study, have demonstrated the effectiveness of counseling programs based on behavioral learning theories in improving study skills and students' academic adjustment (Ghneimat & Alimat, 2011, p. 525).

3.4- Presentation and Discussion of the Fourth Hypothesis Results:

The fourth hypothesis states: "There are no statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test measurements of life satisfaction levels among members of the control group."

Table (04): Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Control Group Members in the Pre-Test and Post-Test for Life Satisfaction.

Life Satisfaction	Pre-Test	Post-Test	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.05	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	17	0.48	2.1	Not Significant	/
Mean (M)	40.11	41,58					
Standard Deviation (SD)	8.35	8,04					

Table (04) shows that the difference between the pre-test mean score (40.11) and the post-test mean score (41.58) for life satisfaction among the control group members is not statistically significant, as the calculated t value (0.48) is smaller than the tabulated value (2.1). This result indicates that students who were not exposed to the counseling program and did not benefit from training in positive coping skills for psychological stress maintained low scores on the Life Satisfaction Scale, with no statistically significant difference between their pre-test and post-test mean scores (40.11 and 41.58, respectively). Both scores are low, given that the average score on the Life Satisfaction Scale is 60. In contrast, their scores remained high on the Stressful Life Events Scale, with pre-test and post-test means of 92.22 and 91.51, respectively.

This finding aligns with Danoff Burg et al. (2004), which showed that African American students who demonstrated competence in coping with stress related to racism and university life were less stressed and anxious and scored higher on the happiness and life satisfaction scales, unlike their counterparts who struggled with stress and exhibited higher anxiety and tension (Al-Madhoun, 2009, p. 05).

Al-Deeb (1988) states that life satisfaction entails self-acceptance, control over one's environment, and the ability to set and achieve goals (Hijazi, 2007, p. 269). Individuals satisfied with their lives tend to have higher self-efficacy, perceiving themselves as strong and capable of influencing stressful situations. Conversely, Basim Al-Daham's study of 300 sixth-grade students in Baghdad middle schools found that "as stressful events increase, self-efficacy decreases, and vice versa" (Al-Daham, 2012). This explains the low life satisfaction scores for the control group in both measurements, as they were deprived of the opportunity to train in using positive coping strategies for stress management.

3.5- Presentation and Discussion of the Fifth Hypothesis Results:

The fifth hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the post-test scores for psychological stress, favoring the control group."

Table (05): Significance of Differences between the Mean Scores for Psychological Stress between the Control Group and the Experimental Group in the Post-Test.

Psychological Stress	Experimental Group	Control Group	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.01	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	34	4,2	2.4	Significant	In Favor of the Control Group
Mean (M)	67,11	91,52					
Standard Deviation (SD)	23,04	6,44					

The table above shows that the calculated t value (4.2) is greater than the tabulated value (2.4) at the significance level (0.01), indicating that the differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-test are statistically significant and in favor of the control group. This result suggests that the techniques and methods used in the counseling program, which the experimental group members benefited from, were effective in helping them reduce their level of psychological stress, while the stress level remained high and unchanged in the control group.

Since coping with stressful situations is an adaptive, learned behavior aimed at solving and overcoming the stressful situation, thereby avoiding the associated psychological stress (Al-Banna, 2008, p. 134), it is logical for these differences in stress levels to appear between those who participated in the cognitive-behavioral counseling program's training activities and those who were isolated from it.

This principle is illustrated by an experiment conducted by Byerman and Foreman (1984), who studied the impact of training in social skills and integration with others on social adaptation. Their sample consisted of 56 pre-adolescent children who showed deficiencies in conversation skills, withdrawal, and low acceptance by others. For the study, they divided the sample into four groups: three experimental groups that received different treatments and one control group that received no treatment. The study found statistically significant differences in favor of all experimental groups across all measures (Suleiman, 2000, p. 58). This finding indicates that these interventions stimulated the growth of these skills, despite differences in cognitive content, practical activities, and methods used. What the experimental group members gained and learned, the control group members did not, creating a difference in skill development in the post-test measurements of the study.

3.6- Presentation and Discussion of the Sixth Hypothesis Results:

The sixth hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the post-test scores for life satisfaction, favoring the experimental group."

Table (06): Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores for Life Satisfaction Between the Control Group and the Experimental Group in the Post-Test.

Life Satisfaction	Experimental Group	Control Group	N	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Significance Level at 0.01	Direction of Difference
Number of Students	17	17	34	8,95	2.4	Significant	In Favor of the Experimental Group
Mean (M)	76,41	41,58					
Standard Deviation (SD)	13,86	8,04					

Table (06) shows that the calculated t value (8.95) is greater than the tabulated value (2.4), indicating that the differences between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the post-test for life satisfaction are statistically significant. This suggests that the activities and training on positive coping strategies, which the experimental group received through the counseling program, helped improve their life satisfaction levels, unlike their counterparts in the control group who were deprived of these benefits.

Joudeh's (2004) study, conducted on 200 students from Al-Aqsa University, also confirms this finding, showing a significant correlation between effective coping strategies and mental health (Al-Asatl, 2010, p.107). Furthermore, a strong relationship was established between mental health and life satisfaction, to the extent that life satisfaction is considered "a hallmark of mental health, as it reflects an individual's personal judgment" (Tuffaha, 2009, p.275).

The increased life satisfaction among the experimental group members can also be attributed to the enjoyment they experienced from the program's activities. Studies by Csikszentmihalyi (1999), Diener (2000), and Seligman (2002) have shown that individuals satisfied with their lives tend to feel fewer unpleasant emotions and more pleasant emotions when engaged in enjoyable activities that involve physical, mental, and spiritual aspects. Life satisfaction goes beyond merely enjoying pleasant activities; it is also associated with activities that stem from an individual's strengths and bring fulfillment and satisfaction (Mansour, 2009, p.43).

The results of this study align with those of Takahashi (2011), who found in his study on 136 individuals with muscular weakness in care institutions that "those who belonged to a group or association had higher levels of life satisfaction than others" (Abdel-Qawi, 2013, p.10). Group belonging provides individuals with support, helping them feel more satisfied. Similarly, Deniz (2006) found that "social support and assistance increase students' life satisfaction" (Al-Madhoun, 2009, p.06). Froh et al. (2009) also confirmed "a positive relationship between life satisfaction and social support" (Abdel-Qawi, 2013, p.10).

CONCLUSION:

The study's results support the findings of numerous previous studies regarding the effectiveness of group-based cognitive-behavioral counseling programs in developing individuals' skills, training them, and providing effective strategies to manage daily problems, thereby enhancing their psychological and social adjustment and achieving an acceptable level of mental health.

This objective represents the ultimate goal of psychological counseling, viewed as a constructive process aimed at helping individuals understand themselves, assess their personalities, identify their

issues, and enhance their ability to solve them, ultimately achieving mental health. For this process to succeed, counseling programs need clearly defined goals, sequential steps, and well-trained human and material resources. This calls for the collective efforts of individuals and national institutions to provide a supportive foundation.

In this context, after interpreting the results in light of psychological and educational research and previous studies on the topic, several recommendations were proposed:

1. It is essential for authorities to prioritize psychological counseling in educational institutions, ensuring it is available to all students and not limited to specific groups, by aligning the tasks of guidance counselors with real-world needs.
2. Develop counseling programs suited to the Algerian environment and the issues faced by its students, ensuring they are feasible within educational institutions, particularly given the human and material resources required.
3. Utilize some holidays and official breaks to schedule activities that relieve stress and offer recreation for students.
4. Raise awareness of the importance of psychological services to help prevent various psychological and behavioral issues.

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