

## The Meaning of Life and its Relations with Unhealthy Behaviors among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan

Fatima Aladwan<sup>1</sup> & Mamduh Alzaben<sup>2</sup>, Abdallah Almahaireh<sup>3</sup> & Mohammad Sulaiman<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

This study aimed to explore the meaning of life among Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan. In particular, it investigated the relationship between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan. The sample comprises 225 Syrian adolescent refugees (104 males and 121 females). The clustering random sampling method was used. Moreover, a scale for exploring the meaning of life was developed to meet the study's goals. A scale for exploring unhealthy behaviors was also developed. The psychometric characteristics of those scales explored were validity and reliability. The respondents' meaning of life level is moderate, and the extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors is moderate. There is a negative statistically significant relationship between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among the respondents. In addition, there is a significant difference between the respondents' meaning of life levels, which can be attributed to gender in favor for females. Conversely, there is a significant difference between the respondents' extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors, which can be attributed to gender for the favor of males. As a result, the researchers recommend exerting effort to reduce the extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors by Syrian adolescent refugees. Furthermore, they recommend exerting effort to improve the meaning of life among them.

**Keywords:** *meaning of life, unhealthy behaviors, Syrian refugees, adolescents, public schools.*

### Introduction

The adolescence stage is significant; it is the stage when one's personality is significantly developed. Positive perceptions about oneself are formed during this stage. Moreover, one tends to become more independent and make decisions independently during this stage. Ultimately, adolescence is when one starts forming one's own identity – connected to the meaning of life – and starts searching for knowledge to form the meaning of life. Therefore, it is necessary to provide

<sup>1</sup> Dr., University of Jordan, [f.aladwan@ju.edu.jo](mailto:f.aladwan@ju.edu.jo)

<sup>2</sup> Dr., University of Jordan, [Mamdohalzaben45@yahoo.com](mailto:Mamdohalzaben45@yahoo.com)

<sup>3</sup> Dr., University of Jordan, [a.mahaere@ju.edu.jo](mailto:a.mahaere@ju.edu.jo)

<sup>4</sup> Dr., Birzeit University, [mohammadaloury@hotmail.com](mailto:mohammadaloury@hotmail.com)

adolescents with guidance to recognize their capabilities or potentials and think and make decisions independently (Bowen, 2010).

The adolescence stage is critical because one experiences difficult social, political, and psychological conditions. In addition, adolescents may suffer from emotional shocks and much stress, affecting their ability to adjust to the surrounding environment (Caplan, 2000; Masud, 2020). Ma'roof (2020) believed that the adolescence stage is a stage leading to adulthood. During this stage, one significantly develops in cognitive, physical, emotional, and social aspects. During this stage, one also starts forming philosophy of life, planning for the future, handling responsibilities, and understanding the goal behind one's life (Tamang & Shrestha, 2021; Yasen, 2020). However, Al-Attar (2021) defined adolescence as the stage through which one grows from a child into an adult. He added that during this stage, one develops cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. He further explained that this stage occurs during the second decade of one's life. It usually starts when one is 11 years old and ends when one is 21 years old.

It is necessary to give attention to adolescents and understand their emotions and behaviors. For adolescents to develop properly, it is necessary to provide them with guidance. That will raise their quality of life and enable them to manage their emotions efficiently (Abdellah, 2020). Adolescents go through various physical, cognitive, emotional, and psychological changes. They may face contradicting values in society, affecting their school, society, and family behaviors. They also experience numerous problems due to their difficulty achieving independence and forming meaning in life (Mirza, 2018; Younsi, 2012).

Adolescents have several needs. For instance, they have social needs, such as forming positive relationships with people from a different gender (Al-En'aimat, 2020). Social needs include forming positive relationships with people, planning for the future, and adjusting socially to the surrounding environment. Adolescents also have psychological needs, such as enjoying self-acceptance and accepting the necessary physical and sexual changes. Psychological needs include enjoying emotional stability and the need to form positive attitudes towards society, family, parents, and peers (Bakkar, 2010). They also include the need to enjoy psychological security and adopt social values (Al-Zou'bi, 2010).

Adolescent refugees suffer greater risks than others because of their age category. The suffering is attributed to the problems of seeking refuge. Adolescent refugees suffer from psychological and physical problems. For instance, some of them were shot earlier during wars. The stress

experienced by adolescent refugees changes their lifestyle, makes them feel isolated, leads them into deviant behaviors, and makes them have no meaning in life (UNHCR, 2013).

Most adolescent refugees went through negative experiences (death of family members and seeing people killed and tortured), which led them to lose the meaning of life. Those experiences negatively affect the development of adolescent refugees. For example, many people – including adolescents – today suffer from physical and psychological problems due to the Syrian conflicts. The negative psychological impacts of the negative experience on adolescent refugees may continue for a long period. Such impacts negatively affect adolescent refugees' well-being, social skills, and behaviors (Abed Al-Razeq, 2021). The research is dedicated to the increasing number of refugees, wars, and natural disasters worldwide. The term refugee refers to every person who cannot return to his homeland due to oppression or war, that can lead them to do unhealthy behaviors (Al-Refai' & Al-Momani, 2020).

Unhealthy behaviors refer to every behavior that threatens physical and mental health. Thus, they can be defined as every behavior that may cause illness or death directly or indirectly. The longer one commits unhealthy behaviors, the higher the risks of such behaviors affecting one's health (Conner & Norman, 2015; Kim & Jia, 2020). Therefore, the risk associated with unhealthy behaviors increases when one starts committing them during the adolescent stage. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention of Risky Behavior suggested that unhealthy behaviors are related to six areas: bad eating habits, lack of physical activity, sexual activities that spread sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, violence, and harmful behavior (Al-Zyadat, 2018).

Adolescents carry out unhealthy behaviors to prove that they are independent and distinguished from others. Such behaviors indicate that an adolescent has unconscious self-harm desire. The psychological shocks, emotional deprivation, biological factors, and adjustment-related problems that adolescents may have experienced lead them to commit unhealthy behaviors (Bin Salem, 2015).

Adolescents usually take risks, as suggested by Abed Al-Raheem (1986), when elaborating on the basic needs of adolescents. He added that male adolescents tend to take risks and commit deviant and violent acts to prove their manliness. Moreover, adolescents acquire new expertise by taking social, physical, and cognitive risks (Al-Sahar, 2002).

Taking drugs is the most dangerous unhealthy behaviors (Ghazeel, 2020). It is a complex and multidimensional problem that must be addressed comprehensively. The World Health

Organization (2001) suggested that drug taking as an unhealthy behavior include family conflicts, having friends who take drugs (Watson & Lenergen, 2004), lack of parental support, having bad experiences at schools during childhood, and having poor social competencies (Al-Fa'oori, 2020). Nikitina (2018) found that despite students realizing the risk factors that may affect their health in the future, they are not eager to become champions of healthy behavior by default. However, sociological research has found that they need to assist and support students in their informal efforts to implement healthy behavior in their daily lifestyle.

Humans have biological needs (e.g. eating, drinking, sleeping, and resting) and psychological needs (e.g. feeling appreciated and accepted). Adolescents' biological and psychological needs must be met for them to be stable biologically and psychologically and develop properly in those aspects. If adolescents' biological and psychological needs are not met, they may experience emotional instability and conflicts. They may also begin to take risks and commit violent and deviant acts. Moreover, they may begin to commit dangerous, unhealthy behaviors, such as taking drugs, indulging in bad eating, and sleeping habits, stealing, lying, and exhibiting aggressive behaviors. Furthermore, they may suffer from psychological and social problems, such as becoming isolated, having negative attitudes towards life and school, losing the meaning of life, and failing to adjust to the school and home environment.

The expression meaning of life is a significant expression in positive psychology. It is connected to happiness, satisfaction with life, and psychological well-being. the therapy based on meaning of life emphasizes on the significance of valuing oneself, enjoying living, and becoming distinguished. Furthermore, this therapy emphasizes the significance of exerting effort to overcome the difficulties faced in life (Kruger, 2002; More & Rodgers, 2020; Snounu, 2019).

Finding the meaning of life is essential to overcoming the psychological problems and challenges one faces. Moreover, existentialists believe the meaning of life affects personality. They believe that the absence of the meaning of life causes psychological problems and negatively affects one's motivation to do any activity. They further believe that the meaning of life affects one's self-control and that having meaning in life enables one to show high levels of productivity, life efficacy, and inner stability (Mohammad & Iskandar, 2020). However, the meaning of life differs from one person to another. Therefore, each person has unique opportunities to discover the meaning of life (Frankel, 2004).

Frankel is one of the early philosophers who developed theories about the meaning of life. He generated his ideas about the meaning of life while in concentration camps in Vienna after WWII. Frankel realized that the formation of the meaning of life is affected by several circumstances and factors. However, the meaning of life is formed during adolescence. They believed that the meaning of life is formed after one's identity gets developed. Hence, identifying the responsibilities that one has in life enables one to form the meaning of life (Frankel, 1998). Steger et al. (2015) suggested that each adolescents forms their meaning of life and searches for it. He suggested that everyone seeks to discover the goal of their existence because he lives in a world full of meanings and goals.

The meaning of life might be formed during the hardest moments in life when one experience the ultimate amount of pain. He believed that the meaning of life enables one to survive the hardest moments of life, enabling one to stay optimistic towards the future. Frankel also believed that each person is responsible for finding the meaning of their life and that each person is responsible for turning the worst experiences into moments of glory and success to meet a specific goal in life. He believed that life is full of opportunities that enable creativity (Chetan. 2009; Al-Sharqawi, 2010). That applies even if one's life is full of crises, pain, and suffering. Frankel (1998) suggested that the meaning of life is based on three main principles: will of meaning, meaning of life, and perception of life (Frankel, 1998). Also, Shawaqfeh and Almahaireh (2019) maintained that the meaning of life is an important aspect of happiness.

Copper (2003) believed that losing the meaning of life is a state that many people suffer. This state may be experienced during any stage of life. For instance, it may be experienced during adolescence, crises, or after retirement, and it may cause many psychological disorders, such as depression, addiction, or suicide. Earnshaw (2000) defined losing the meaning of life as the state in which one does not have any goal in life, but Frankel (2004) defined it as the state in which one feels bored and does not have any ambition. In this state, one believes that all acts do not have any value. Moreover, in this state, one cannot handle stressful events.

Many Syrian adolescent refugees feel that they are socially rejected and constitute a burden to society; many of them feel they do not have any goal in life and, therefore, suffer from depression and social injustice. That makes them feel frustrated and experience a state of hopelessness and deprivation. Eventually, it leads to losing the meaning of life and feeling that they do not have any value in life (Abed Al-Wahad, 2012; Corey, 2011).

Syrian adolescent refugees suffer from social and psychological problems, including unhealthy behaviors and losing the meaning of life. Thus, they must handle the challenges because the meaning of life may be lost during the adolescence stage. In this case, one may ask, why am I living, and what is the goal sought from living? Asking such questions might lead the adolescent into deviant acts (Mahmood, 2001). Syrian refugee students are enrolled in Jordanian schools had painful experiences due to war, which affected their psychological status, the ability to adjust socially, and the ability to handle responsibilities (Al-Smadi, 2020). Also, forced displacement is considered a major shock that causes psychological instability may cause depression, anxiety, and frustration. It may also lead to losing the meaning of life and starting to commit unhealthy behaviors.

This study has studied the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among Syrian refugee students. which can promote awareness about the significance of providing social and psychological services to them, by developing counselling programs to reduce unhealthy behaviors and promote the positive meaning of life among adolescent refugees, which helps them to overcome the difficulties faced in life.

Bani Ali (2019) discovered that there is a negative relationship between anger and quality of life. Al-Zyadat (2018) found that the meaning of life negatively correlates with unhealthy behaviors. She found that the meaning of life significantly affects the extent of carrying out unhealthy behaviors and that there is a significant difference between students regarding unhealthy behaviors due to gender in favor of females. Al-Saqer (2017) found a positive relationship between the meaning of life and self-efficacy among students. He found a difference between respondents in meaning of life, which can be attributed to gender for the favor of females. Fatooh (2016) found that the rise in the depression level leads to a rise in the meaning of life level among Syrian refugees. Brassai et al. (2015) found that the meaning of life contributes to preserving healthy behaviors, such as carrying out physical activities and good eating habits. They found that the difference is in favor for females. They also found that the meaning of life negatively correlates with unhealthy behaviors among adolescents in Romania. Moreover, Bahloul (2018) found a significant relationship between quality of life and unhealthy behaviors.

The previous studies didn't investigate the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among adolescent refugee students, which is important to understand why they act negatively in schools and to help them to move on in their lives.

## **Study Problem**

Adolescents suffer from many social, behavioural, and psychological problems due to changes in hormones. They start becoming independent. They seek to discover new things and carry out risky behaviours that may threaten their lives and health. Therefore, there is a need to carry out more studies on Syrian refugees. The migration of Syrian refugees negatively affected them while facing new society, homeland, and school, but some Syrian refugees faced such challenges positively and adjusted socially.

However, other Syrian refugees were negatively affected by the forced migration. For instance, their meaning of life was negatively affected. Some of them started carrying out negative, unhealthy behaviours. Erikson and Mashya believed that the meaning of life is formed during adolescence and after one's identity is developed. Identity development involves recognising and fulfilling responsibilities. Identifying the responsibilities that one has in life enables one to form the meaning of life (Frankel, 1998).

The researchers work in educational and humanitarian fields, where they learn about refugees' problems and challenges. Hence, they conducted a field study to explore the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours among Syrian adolescent refugees.

## **Research Questions**

The current study investigated the relationship between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours among Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan. The investigation is conducted by asking the following secondary questions:

1. What is the meaning of life level among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan?
2. What is the extent of practising unhealthy behaviours among Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan?
3. Is there any relationship at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan?
4. Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the level of the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours according to gender?

## Method

### Research Design

This study used a quantitative correlation approach to investigate the levels of the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan by calculating the means and standard deviations to investigate the levels of the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors, the possible relationship among these two variables by Person correlation test to test the first hypothesis, and the differences in the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors according to gender by independent T-test to test the second hypotheses (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The meaning of life scale and unhealthy behaviors scale were applied to Syrian adolescent refugee students in public schools in Amman in the academic year 2021.

### Participants

The study community comprised all Syrian adolescent refugee students in public schools in Amman in the academic year 2021. According to the Jordan Ministry of Education (2020) statistics, Syrian adolescent refugee students were approximately 3412. The study sample was chosen randomly and was made up of 225 students from 8th, 9th, and 10th grade in public schools in Amman, representing 7% of the study community. Before the study commenced, the written consent of the students and the approval of the Jordan Ministry of Education were obtained.

**Table 1**

*Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N = 225)*

Gender/ Grade	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	Total
Males	42 (18.7%)	40 (17.8%)	39 (17.3%)	121 (53.8%)
Females	36 (16%)	35 (15.6%)	33 (14.7%)	104 (46.2%)
Total	78 (34.7%)	75 (33.3%)	72 (32%)	225 (100%)

### Data Collection Tools

#### *The Meaning of Life Scale*

The researchers conducting the study created the meaning of life scale, adapting it from Al-Sandi et al. (2013), Mu'amareye (2012), and Mustafa (2013). The scale comprised 30 items distributed in three dimensions: goals in life, experiences in life, and perception for life. Each item was rated on a five-point scale from five (it applies to me to a very great extent) to one (it does not apply to me). Higher scores reflected a higher level of meaning of life. The researchers calculated the validity and reliability and found that the discriminate evidence ranged between 0.31 and 0.81. In

contrast, the internal validity of the dimensions ranged between 0.51 and 0.74. Cronbach's alpha initially ranged between 0.86 and 0.92, and then the retest ranged between 0.84 and 0.87 two weeks later.

### ***The Unhealthy Behaviours Scale***

The researchers adapted the scale of the unhealthy behaviour of Mahmood (2001), Redwan & Reeskah (2011), and Al-Amami (2007). The inventory comprised 45 items, each of which the participants were asked to rate on a five-point scale from five (it applies to me to a very great extent) to one (it does not apply to me). Higher scores reflected a higher level of unhealthy behaviours. It included three dimensions: misuse of drugs and medications, lack of personal care, and malnutrition. The researchers extracted the validity and reliability and found that the discriminate evidence ranged between 0.35 and 0.74, while the internal validity of the dimensions ranged between 0.66 and 0.74. Cronbach's alpha for the scale and its dimensions ranged from 0.81–0.89, and then from 0.83–0.91 at the retest, two weeks later.

### **Data Collection**

The researchers obtained approval for this study from the Jordan Ministry of Education. Data were collected by questionnaires covering the two scales: the meaning of life and the unhealthy behaviors together on the three Grades by online form. The questionnaire answers were downloaded from the online survey and checked to make sure they were analyzable, the answers were record by the five Likert scale rate five (it applies to me to a very great extent), four (it applies to me to a very great), three (it applies to me to a medium degree) two (it applies to me to a low degree), to one (it does not apply to me).

### **Data Analysis**

SPSS was used to discover the results. Then, descriptive statistics using arithmetic means and standard deviations to answer the first and second questions, whereas the Pearson correlation test was extracted to answer the third question because it analyses the linear correlation between two data sets. Moreover, to answer the fourth question, the independent t-test was used to examine the differences between the averages of intellectual security and life satisfaction according to gender. The independent t-test was used because it analyses the statistical differences between the means of two groups.

## **Findings**

### **Classic Assumption Test**

This test is useful for determining whether there are deviations in the assumptions before regression because the regression equation must not deviate from the BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator) criteria. The classical assumption test comprises the steps below.

### **Results of the Normality Test and Homogeneity Test**

The normality and homogeneity tests using Levene's tests were made for the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours, as a requirement for using parametric tests. The results show a normality distribution (Ghozali, 2018), and there was homogeneity, according to Hair et al. (2018). The skewness for the meaning of life was 0.280 while the kurtosis was 0.190, and the homogeneity test was not significant at the level of (0.05). The skewness for unhealthy behaviours was 0.463, while the kurtosis was 0.172, and the homogeneity test was not significant at the level of (0.05).

The results indicate that data of this study are normally distributed and the sample are homogeneous showing that both groups are equal. Statistically this allows to proceed to see the different of both groups.

### **Multicollinearity Test**

The multicollinearity test is a requirement for using correlation test to ensure the existence of the independent variables based on the VIF and tolerance values. The data are free from multicollinearity if tolerance is greater than 0.10 and the VIF value is less than 10 (Ghozali, 2018). This means that data are about the same and statistical analysis to see variance inflation factor (VIF) to identify the independent variables and the strength of that correlation is approved.

### ***The Meaning of Life Level among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan***

Arithmetic averages and standard deviations for the meaning of life are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Arithmetic Average and Standard Deviation for the Meaning of Life, Including the Latter's Sub-Dimensions*

Variable	Average	Standard deviation	Level	Dimension rank
Perception for life	3.29	0.85	Moderate	1
Experiences in life	2.89	1.01	Moderate	2
Goals in life	2.28	1.08	Low	3
The total meaning of life	2.85	0.64	Moderate	

It is to be noted from Table 2 that the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan achieved moderate levels of meaning of life with an arithmetic average of 2.85 and a standard deviation of 0.64. In addition, the various dimensions of the meaning of life also achieved arithmetic averages ranging between 2.28 and 3.29, the Perception for life came first with mean of 3.29, followed by Experiences in life with a mean of 2.89, while the Goals in life came last with mean of 2.28.

### ***The Extent of Practising Unhealthy Behaviours among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan***

Arithmetic averages and standard deviations for the unhealthy behaviours are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Arithmetic Average and Standard Deviation for Unhealthy Behaviours, Including the Latter's Sub-dimensions*

Variable	Average	Standard deviation	Level	Dimension rank
Malnutrition	3.58	1.00	Moderate	1
Misuse of drugs and medications	3.50	0.89	Moderate	2
Lack of personal care	3.45	1.14	Moderate	3
Total unhealthy behaviours	3.51	0.70	Moderate	

Notably, from Table 3, the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan achieved moderate levels of unhealthy behaviours with an arithmetic average of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 0.70. Furthermore, the various dimensions of unhealthy behaviours also

achieved a moderate level with arithmetic averages ranging between 3.45 and 3.58, the Malnutrition came first with mean of 3.58, followed by Misuse of drugs and medications with a mean of 3.50, while the Lack of personal care came last with mean of 3.45.

### Hypothesis Testing

***Ha1: There is a statistically significant relationship at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan.***

The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to test the first hypotheses, and Table 4 illustrates the results.

**Table 4**

*The Correlation Coefficient between the Meaning of Life and Unhealthy behaviours*

Variable	Total unhealthy behaviours	Misuse of drugs and medications	Lack of personal care	Malnutrition
Total meaning of life	0.44*-	*0.29-	0.30*-	0.29*-
Goals in life	0.30*-	*0.13-	0.18*-	0.25*-
Experiences in life	0.28*-	*0.16-	0.22*-	0.30*-
Perception for life	0.41*-	*0.59-	0.23*-	0.34*-

From Table 4, the correlation coefficients for the meaning of life with unhealthy behaviours and its dimensions were statistically significant as the correlation coefficients were negative, the relationship between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours were -0.44. In contrast, the relationships between the dimensions ranged between -0.13 and -0.59, but the relationships between the meaning of life dimensions and unhealthy behaviours were ranged between -0.28 and -0.41. Also, the relationships between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours dimensions were ranged between -0.29 and -0.30.

***Ha2: There are statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the level of meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours according to gender.***

The independent t-test was used to test the second hypothesis to examine the differences between genders concerning performance averages and the statistical significance of the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours of Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan. Table 5 illustrates this.

**Table 5**

*Results, According to Gender, of Average Performance on the Meaning of Life and Unhealthy Behaviours*

Factor	N	Gender	mean	Standard deviation	DF	T	Sig.
meaning of life	104	Male	2.46	0.61	223	9.14-	0.00
	121	Female	3.14	0.50			
unhealthy behaviours	104	Male	3.68	0.56	223	4.18-	0.00
	121	Female	3.31	0.76			

Table 5 shows a statistically significant difference at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) in the meaning of life level due to gender in favour for females with a mean of 3.14, the T value were -9.14. Also, the results show a statistically significant difference at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the respondents' extent of practising unhealthy behaviours due to gender in favour for males with a mean of 3.68, the T value were -4.18.

### **Discussion**

The study results showed moderate levels of meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan, that there is a relationship between the variables. However, females and males differ regarding the level of meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors, respectively.

#### **The Meaning of Life Level Among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan**

The meaning of life level among Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan is moderate. Respondents' attitudes towards the perception of life and experiences in life are moderate. However, respondents' attitudes towards goals in life are negative. The overall mean is 2.85, and the overall standard deviation is 0.64. The latter result could be attributed to the fact that having dangerous behavior affects one's meaning of life and perception of life. The mean of experiences in life is ranked second. Which means that those refugees need to organise their experiences in life considering the changes they went through. The mean of the perception for life is moderate and ranked third. The latter result can be attributed to providing social and psychological support for refugees during early adolescence. Institutions, families, and teachers provide such support. Also, the meaning of life came in moderate level because of the counsellor's role in supporting and guidance the students in their problems. The result in this regard is consistent with the one reached by Al-Zaben & Al-Sharah (2017), who found that the meaning of life level

is moderate. However, the result is not consistent with the one reached by Al-Zyadat (2018). The latter researchers found that the meaning of life level is high.

### **The Extent of Practicing Unhealthy Behaviors Among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan**

The researchers found that the extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors is moderate, which applies to all the dimensions jointly and separately. Those dimensions are the misuse of drugs and medications, lack of personal care, and malnutrition. The overall mean is 3.51, and the overall standard deviation is 0.70. This result could be attributed to the fact that those refugees suffered from shocks (e.g. torture, fear, death of parents and friends, and seeing people killed or hurt). Such shocks also include loss of healthcare services and basic needs like food, water, safety, and a sense of belonging, which made refugees migrate from their place of residence and lose hope. It also led to the practice of unhealthy behaviors to a moderate level. The unhealthy behaviors practiced by refugees include misuse of drugs and medications, lack of personal care, and malnutrition. The mean of the lack of personal care is ranked last. This may be attributed to those refugees living in camps that do not have all the resources needed for personal care and properly carry out hygiene-related practices. The misuse of drugs and medications may be attributed to many refugees taking medication for insomnia and some refugees smoking. It may also be attributed to many refugees taking drugs because they feel insecure and unsafe. The result in this regard is inconsistent with the one reached by Al-Zyadat (2018), who found that the extent of practicing dangerous behavior is low.

### **The Relationship between the Meaning of Life and Unhealthy Behaviors Among Syrian Adolescent Refugees Enrolled in Public Schools in Jordan**

The researchers found a negative, statistically significant relationship at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors among the Syrian adolescent refugees enrolled in public schools in Jordan. The correlation coefficient value is  $-0.44$ . This result means that improving the meaning of life can reduce the extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors. Moreover, it means that a fall in the meaning of life level can increase the extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors. It further means that it is necessary to improve the meaning of life among refugees to reduce the degree to which they practice unhealthy behaviors.

This result can be explained that the psychosocial support provided to Syrian students in Amman by counsellors through intensive individual and group counselling programs led to an improvement in the quality of life and a reduction in the practice of unhealthy behaviors due to

adopting new life goals for these students and practicing new experiences and discussing them in a safe environment, and they receive nutrition corrective review to modify unhealthy behaviors and acquire healthy behaviors.

The result in this regard is consistent with the ones reached by Abed Al-Haleem (2010), Al-Saqer (2017), Bahloul (2018), Bani Ali (2019), Brassai et al. (2015), Fatooh (2016), and Al-Zyadat (2018).

### **Differences in the Level of Meaning of life and Unhealthy Behaviors According to Gender**

The researchers found a statistically significant difference at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the respondents' meaning of life levels, which can be attributed to gender for the favor of females. This is because the t-value is  $-9.14$ , which is statistically significant. They also found a statistically significant difference at the statistical significance level of ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the respondents' extent of practicing unhealthy behaviors, which can be attributed to gender for the favor of males. This is because the t-value is  $-4.18$ , which is statistically significant.

Having differences between respondents' meaning of life level for the favor of females indicates that females realize the value of life. The degree to which female respondents practice unhealthy behaviours is lower than the level of their male counterparts. That means that more attention must be provided for males to improve the meaning of their lives and reduce the degree to which they practice unhealthy behaviors. The result in this regard is consistent with the result reached by Al-Saqer (2017). The latter researcher found a difference between respondents regarding the meaning of life, which can be attributed to gender for the favor of females. The result in this regard is not consistent with the result reached by Al-Zaben & Al-Sharah (2017), who found no significant difference between respondents' meaning of life level, which can be attributed to gender. The result is also not consistent with the result reached by Fatooh (2016), who found no significant difference between respondents' meaning of life level, which can be attributed to gender, the gaps between the results can be explained by that the participants in this study were in Amman while Fatooh (2016) participants were in the refugee's camps, which means that the refugees in the cities had differences in the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviors between the camps and cities.

Also, the novelty of this research, conducting counselling programs to help males improve the meaning of life and reduce unhealthy behaviors and provide them with healthy behaviors that help them integrate with society and the school, in addition to conducting guidance programs for

females to improve the meaning of life in order to set realistic goals that they seek to achieve and give them more hope and enhance ability to take responsibility.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

The result of this study indicates that the meaning of life and the extent of practising unhealthy behaviours levels are moderate which means that the Syrian refugee students behave in an unhealthy way that can affect their life's and physical and psychological health, and they lost the purpose of their life's during the war and refugee. There is a negative relationship between the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours which indicates that losing the meaning of life can increase unhealthy behaviours because they didn't worry about anything, and they think that nothing matters. There is a significant difference in the meaning of life level, which can be attributed to gender in favour for females. There is a significant difference in the unhealthy behaviours, which can be attributed to gender for the favour of males, that's mean the males was psychologically affected by the war more than females.

A limitation of this study is that it was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, it's applied on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> refugees' students on Amman, in the 2021 academic year. The scales were applied by online survey.

Regarding the results of this study, the researchers presented the conclusion and offered several recommendations. For instance, they found that more attention must be given to the refugees enrolled in public schools and that the meaning of life must be improved among Syrian refugee students. Moreover, they found that the unhealthy behaviours committed by refugee students must be reduced. Therefore, they recommend developing counselling programmes for meeting such goals. They also recommend conducting more studies on the meaning of life and unhealthy behaviours, targeting other age categories.

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