

"The Effectiveness of a Group Counseling Program Based on Psychological Religious Counseling in Mitigating Psychological Stressors Among Mentally-Disabled Children's Mothers"

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the effect of a Group Counseling Program based on psychological religious counseling in mitigating psychological stressors among mentally-disabled children's mothers in Al-Karak governorate using a sample of (40) mental-disabled children's mothers who were divided into two groups (20) mothers as the experimental group which received the counseling program and (20) mothers as the control one which didn't receive the program. The psychological stressors scale was used after verifying its validity and reliability. The results indicated differences in the two groups' performance means in psychological stressors and these differences were in favor of the experimental group which indicates the effect of the psychological religious program on mitigating psychological stressors among mothers of mentally-disabled children. The study recommends the necessity of applying such programs on mothers of disabled children from other classifications of disability and on the family members of disabled children so as not to limit such programs to mothers only.

Keywords: Counseling, Religious Counseling, Mental Disabilities.

Introduction:

counseling in particular are considered important Psychological counseling in general and religious psychology methods in helping individuals to get rid of some psychological problems that restrict the individuals' effectiveness and reduce their motivation towards different activities. People face many problems which makes them feel insecure, and this leads to psychological pain. The researchers selected religious counseling as a counseling method to mitigate problems, since several researchers confirmed the importance of religion as a basic pillar that helps individuals manage psychological issues. For some religious believers, religion is the only recourse to get through psychological traumas. Some studies also assert the relationship between religious effect and psychological health, confirming that belief and religious experiences have an important role in reducing psychological disorders. Religious counseling is the best way to avoid the increased incidence of psychological stressors. Since the psychological stressors can have adverse effects on the different aspects of the mothers' personality and their psychological safety, there emerged the need to conduct this study in order to help mothers get rid of those stressors by developing a religious psychological counseling program.

(Brandon & Hogan ,2001) confirmed that the social factors may lead to psychological stressors, in addition to the family's suffering of economic difficulties.

Family is considered as a complete system that includes a group of individuals where each one of them affects the other and is also affected by them. For example, the existence of a disabled child in the family represents a source of stress, either directly or indirectly, which entails the necessity of satisfying the needs of the family to enable them to face the psychological stressors resulting from the child's disability.

(Turnbull and Turnbull, 1997) suggests that there is a change that characterizes the functions and roles of the family that has a disabled child. Also, the economic, social and psychological systems are affected by that, where the family needs more time to adapt with the changes that affected its roles and functions.

The most common stressors among the families of disabled children are represented by the stage of birth and diagnosis, the necessity of fulfilling the disabled child's needs, the stage of entering school or educational institution, the disabled child behavior and developmental difficulties as well as the other people's rejection of the disabled child (Yousef, 2010).

(Smith, 2003) determined several types of stressors and the factors leading to that, including thinking about the child's state, his different physical appearance in comparison with others, his need for attention, constant care, the attitudes towards the disabled child, being exposed to sarcasm and frustration, minimizing the time allocated to other children in the family, friends' feeling of lack of rest and avoiding communication with the family, avoiding social situations, lack of accurate information, in addition to unanswered questions about the future.

(Al-Khateeb and Al-Hadidi, 1998) suggests that the sources of stress stem from the lack of sufficient opportunities for social interaction due to the child's needs for care as well as the difficulty of getting help to satisfy those needs.

Moreover, joining the disabled child outside the house could, by itself, be a source of stress. If taking care of normal children and upbringing them well is a difficult task, then the task will be more difficult for the disabled children.

(Lesser, Gerber and Semmel, 1995) suggests that the existence of a disabled child in the family is a basic stressor on the family individuals. Also, Dale (1996) confirmed that these stressors result from accumulative experiences due to the existence of the disabled child in the family which, in turn, affects all the family members with varying degrees. The tackled stressors and problems surpass the endurance limits of the individuals and exhaust them; therefore, they are exposed to short and long-term health problems.

(Marsh, 1992) referred to the factors that help the family to face the stressors resulting from the existence of disability, such as looking for information, problem-solving, behavior management, sharing feelings, confrontation plans side by side

with other families, developing cooperative relationships with specialists, training for social skills, cognitive restructuring, relaxation and looking for information.

(Seligman, 1993) suggests that group counseling is one of the best counseling interventions since it contributes to reducing alienation, increases confrontation skills, and reduces stress. (Yihia, 2003) stated that group counseling aims to reintegrating personality and adapting it with motivation and reality, providing information, as well as using educational counseling methods in order to reduce stress.

(Yarkindi, 2003) suggests that religious counseling has several aspects, including that innateness of human beings at birth and that the environment in which he lives constructs him. AbdulMajid (2007) suggests that the bases on which psychological counseling is based in the light of Islam are represented by adaptability, human behaviors are based on awareness and feeling of them, responsibility is both individual and collective, counseling and therapy are based on knowledge then work, as well as the ability of decision-making and taking action. (Al-Mahdi, 2005) suggests that religious psychological counseling refer to the religious discussion that is based on objective innate of ideas and respecting the individual's right to think.

(Rabi', 2005) argues that religious psychological counseling is a form of modern psychological counseling, which derives its values from Islam, and that it is effective in reducing psychological disorders which would, in turn, achieve psychological and spiritual stability to the individual. (Mousa and Mohammad, 2003) suggests that religious counseling has considerable importance in counseling the different psychological states which, in turn, supports the interest in religious counseling programs and their effectiveness in treating disorders and achieving psychological stability. Religion achieves psychological balance through its principles that correspond with the human nature. Religious psychological counseling has a positive role in mitigating psychological disorders among individuals. (Fayid, 2005) confirmed that religious counseling leads to a better psychological health as well as more ability to tackle diseases and overcome their negative consequences. It also leads to the rapid recovery of psychological symptoms, the feeling of happiness, satisfaction and confidence to face challenges and crises that may affect his life and consequently lead to the feeling of comfort and safety.

Religious feelings lead to the feeling of happiness, satisfaction, belief in fate which, in turn, helps the individual to face stressors. It provides confidence and power to tackle the challenges and crises; this gives the best images of support). 2014and tranquility and assures the individual's future (Saadat,

(Al-Zarad, 2004) suggests that most contemporary psychologists believe that religious counseling contributes to modifying behavior due to its impact on personality. It addresses religious requirements touch the ethical and spiritual domains of the human being.

The individual's relationship with Allah develops by satisfying the orders of Allah in secret and public situations, promoting the feelings of loving Allah and resorting to Him in the time of wealth and need as well, accepting Allah's fate and destiny, preventing self from following its appetences, the constant performance of worship duties as well as the frequent remembering and praise to Allah and understanding self and others through the close relationship with Allah (Ghabawi, 1984).

The main objective of Islamic religious counseling is represented by strengthening the relationship between creatures and Allah. The other objectives of this religious counseling include resolving the individual's internal conflicts, dealing with the irrational beliefs, increasing awareness, achieving success, developing the feeling of responsibility, making meaning in life and contributing to self-control (Saadat, 1436).

(Ammar, 2000) suggests that religious psychology is based on the principle of resorting to Allah in the time of crisis in order to get rid of the disorders, feel of satisfaction and tranquility, and avoid panic since he asks Allah to take away anxiety and distress.

(Abu Shahba, 2007) suggests that we can determine the bases of religious counseling by the values present in the Holy Quran and prophetic Sunna, the Islamic heritage and what has been reported by muslim scholars of psychological theories and perspectives concerning psychological counseling. Moreover, he recommends following modern psychologists in the field of religious psychological counseling and Islam's confirmation concerning human beings' capability to learn, and shape their behavior according to what is acceptable.

Religion has social and psychological effects on the individual and community, where it provides the individual with a set of social standards and principles that enable him to adapt with surrounding environment. Religion also provides us with the vision of another intangible world through which we feel psychological stability, since it is considered as a reference to which the individual resorts in tackling the different forms of conflict (Al-Hodaibi, 2010).

(Morsi, 1997) defined religious counseling as the processes of social psychological learning and teaching that take place between a client and a counselor, where different strategies are used to help the client solve his problems, encourage him to accept the fate and destiny, train him to make decisions based on the legislation of Allah and attain self-achievement by implementing the regulations and rules revealed by Allah, and consequently achieve happiness in this life and the afterlife.

(Khadir, 2000) defined it as the attempt to help individuals to use the religious data to reach a state of adjustment that allows the individual to control his emotions to the extent that helps him to succeed in life. (Yarkendi, 2003) suggests that religious psychological counseling refers to using the principles of religion in directing the individual's behavior. (Al-Habib, 2005) suggests that religious counseling uses the techniques, concepts and values of religion in modifying the defects of self and taking it back to the right innate created by Allah.

(Corey, 2005) suggests that religious counseling is a set of specialized services provided by specialists in counseling psychology to the individuals suffering from social, personal and psychological disorder. Therefore, religious feelings lead to satisfaction and happiness, where it becomes the resort in the time of crisis, and the individual feels safe and optimistic; this positive feeling is achieved through prayer which reduces the feelings of fear and anxiety (Fram, 2003).

The previous studies:

Researchers addressed the topic of psychological stressors among parents resulting from the existence of a disabled individual in general and mentally disabled in particular.

(Farah and Amin, 2015) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of mentally-disabled children attending the Medical Army Hospital as well as identifying whether there are differences between the dimensions of these stressors. The researchers used the descriptive approach. The study sample consisted of (30) individuals who were chosen intentionally. The results showed that the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the mentally-disabled children were low, and that there are differences between the extent of these stressors among the mothers of the mentally-disabled children in favor of the physical symptoms.

(Al-Fiqi, 2013) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the effectiveness of a religious counseling program in developing social communication among the female patients suffering from cancer and its impact on the quality of family life. The study sample consisted of (12) breast cancer patients, who were equally divided into two groups (experimental, control). The study concluded about the effectiveness of the used program in developing social communication among the female cancer patients, which positively affected the quality of life among them.

(Al-Qahtani, 2013) conducted a study entitled "Religious Counseling and its Role in Social Adjustment, an Analytical Study on the Female Inmates of a Girls' Care Institution in Riyadh. The study sample consisted of (47) female respondents. The results revealed that the study sample individuals agreed about the importance of religious counseling in social adjustment.

(Bayoumi, 2011) conducted a study entitled "the effectiveness of a program based on religious counseling in developing self-concept among the students of Azhari basic stage". The study sample consisted of (38) male and female students; the experimental group (n=18), and the control group (n=20). The study showed that the effectiveness of the counseling program in the post-measurement in favor of the experimental group. The program also proved its effectiveness during the follow up.

(Ghaith, Al-Masri, and Miza Ghobian, 2011) conducted a study which aimed at detecting the effectiveness of a training program based on behavioral cognitive theory in reducing psychological stressors among the mothers of the students with The study sample consisted of (30) students from Al-Hussein Society for caring and rehabilitating .Meningomyelocele those with kinetic difficulties. The sample was divided into two equal groups (experimental and control). The results revealed that there are statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group after applying the program.

(Fatima Darwish, 2011) conducted a study about the psychological stressors among the parents of the mentally-disabled children and the ways of dealing with that. The study sample consisted of (40) male and female parents, (2) males and (20) females. The results revealed that the inability to take the responsibility of a disabled child represented the most important resources for psychological stressors among parents, followed by stress, cognitive and psychological problems of children, the psychological and physical problems, independent performance, feelings of depression and despair, and finally family and social problems.

(Hussein, 2009) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the relationship between social support, psychological stressors and anxiety among breast cancer female patients. The study sample consisted of (67) patients attending the national institution for tumors. The results revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support and psychological stressors, since the increased support reduces psychological problems and vice versa, especially with the oldest patients.

(Ibn Jaber, 2008) conducted a study which aimed at investigating the effectiveness of a counseling program based on cognitive behavioral theory in reducing psychological stressors among a sample of the mothers of autistic children in The Riyadh. The study sample consisted of (30) mothers who were divided into two groups (experimental and control.) results revealed the effectiveness of the program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the experimental group individuals.

(Al-Atiyat, 2008) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the impact of religious counseling on the behavior of inmates. The study sample consisted of (200) inmates in Tabouk. The results revealed that there is an impact for religious counseling on the inmates in the domains of religious, ethical and psychological refinement.

(Mdanat, 2008) conducted a study which aimed at measuring the effectiveness of a group counseling program in reducing psychological stressors among the mothers of children with brain paralysis in Jordan. The study sample consisted of (60) mothers distributed equally to two experimental and control groups. The results revealed the effectiveness of the program in reducing psychological stressors.

(Antoni and Winberly, 2006) conducted a study which aimed at identifying the effectiveness of group counseling program in reducing psychological stressors and stress and improving the quality of life. The study sample consisted of (199) women. The results revealed that the constant group therapy contributed to reducing stress and improving the quality of life.

(Nassar and Al-Shafe'i, 2005) conducted a study which aimed at investigating the effectiveness of religious counseling in reducing future anxiety among a sample of the students of the university of King Saud as well as detecting the impact of religious counseling on the female students of the seventh level compared to the female students of the first level based on a religious counseling program, which was developed for the study purpose. The program includes some religious texts from the Holy Quran and the prophetic Sunna. The study sample consisted of (60) mothers of children with brain paralysis in Jordan distributed equally to two experimental and control groups. The study sample consisted of (192) female students from the first and seventh levels in the faculty of education in the university of King Saud. The results revealed that there are no core differences between the students in the first and seventh levels concerning future anxiety. The results also revealed that there is a positive impact of the program on reducing future anxiety among the study sample individuals. The results revealed that the positive impact of the program on reducing future anxiety was higher among the students of the seventh level compared to the students of the first level after applying the counseling sessions of the program.

(Maali, 2003) conducted a study that aimed at identifying the impact of gaining protection against stress, having training about problem-solving to reduce psychological stressors and improving the level of adaptation among the mothers of children with special needs. The study sample consisted of (60) mothers of special-needs children. The results revealed the impact of the counseling program on reducing the level of psychological stressors and improving the level of adaptation among students.

(Bakhesh, 2002) conducted a study that aimed at identifying the impact of psychological stressors that face the mothers of the mentally ill children as well as their relationship with family needs and social support as a method for reducing the severity of stressors. The study sample consisted of (100) mothers of mentally-ill children from the city of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. The results revealed that there is a significant correlation relationship between stressors, family needs and social support among the mothers of mentally-ill children.

(Jamil, 1998) conducted a study that aimed at investigating the impact of a counseling program on handling the stressors facing the families with mentally-ill children after getting out of internal institutions. The study sample consisted of (30) families with mentally-ill children. The results revealed that there are statistically significant differences concerning the degree of family confrontation to the stressors to which they are exposed before and after applying the program in favor of the experimental group and the post-measurement.

(Wolf et al. 1989) conducted a study that aimed at investigating the impact of psychological stressors on the parents of autistic children and the parents on normal children. The study sample consisted of (167) parents of children with Down syndrome and (121) parents of normal children. The results revealed that the mothers of autistic children showed more levels of depression compared to the mothers of normal children. The results showed that social support reduces the impact of stressors and recommended the necessity of providing more counseling services.

(Singer et al, 1988) conducted a study that aimed at training the parents of children with severe disability to manage stress as well as assessing the effectiveness of self-treatment methods in reducing psychological stressors among parents. The results revealed that the training program had a positive impact on reducing the parents' feeling of alienation and making social communication with others.

The study problem:

The study problem is represented by the following main question:

What is the effectiveness of a group counseling program based religious psychological counseling in reducing psychological stressors among the mothers of the mentally-disabled children?

The study also investigates the following hypothesis: " there is a statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the counseling program based on religious counseling in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of mentally-disabled children."

The study importance:

The study importance lies in addressing an important category of disabled children, mental disability, and its impact on families, especially mothers and the consequences of that concerning the psychological stressors which cannot be endured by many families. The study's importance also lies in the possibility of recognizing the benefits of applying religious counseling program to other disabled categories and addressing the effects on all family members, not just mothers.

The study objectives:

This study aims to investigate the impact and effectiveness of a group counseling program based on religious psychological counseling on reducing mothers' psychological stressors resulting from the presence of a disabled child in the family.

The study terminology:

Counseling program:

It is the overall conclusion of the activities that are performed in order to do a certain counseling activity, demonstrate situations, determine the different types of problems, determine the appealed objectives, assign resources and set a work plan through which problems can be overcome and objectives can be achieved (Al-Safasfeh, 2010).

It is procedurally defined as the procedures that are organized, and planned in a scientific way to help the mothers of mentally-disabled children reduce the level of psychological stressors and provide them with a set of skills to deal with the different situations.

Psychological stressors: several definitions were introduced for the concept of stressors. Some researchers defined it as the conditions and events that put the individual into a state of restlessness due to threatening his safety and stability and cause a set of behavioral, psychological and physiological changes to help him adapt again (Abdul-Sattar, 1998). (Lazarus, 1993) defined it as a state of emotional distress which results from the situations of disorder in the biological and physiological functions accompanied by the lack of required cognitive functions to deal with that.

It is procedurally defined as the score that the respondents score on the scale of psychological stressors, which was developed particularly for the purposes of the current study.

The study limits:

The study is limited to the mothers of mentally-disabled children in Al-Karak governorate with all its districts.

The study was limited to the psychological counseling program as well as the used the measurement instrument which is designed particularly for the purposes of the current study.

The study population:

The study population consisted of the mothers of mentally-disabled children in Al-Karak governorate.

The study sample:

The study sample was chosen intentionally due to the far distance between the divergent districts from the governorate center and from the site where sessions are held. The study sample consisted of (40) mothers of mentally disabled children, who were randomly divided into two groups; the experimental group (n=20) mothers, and the control group (n=20) mothers.

The study instruments:

For the purposes of this study, the scale of psychological stressors was used after referring to the literature related to mental disability and psychological stressors and reviewing several scales that addressed the psychological stressors and their family, social, physiological and psychological effects. The scale consisted of (40) items that are answered based on a 5-point scale, where the highest score is (200) and the lowest score is (40). The low degree of psychological stressors range the medium degree ranges between (94- less than 147), for between (40- less than 94) for the choices (1,2) on the scale; the choice (3) on the scale; and the highest degree ranges between (147-200) for the choices (4, 5).

The instrument's validity:

The instrument's validity was verified by introducing it to a number of arbitrators from the faculty members at Mu'tah university and Balqa' Applied University in the departments of psychology, special education, psychological counseling, and assessment and measurement, with a total of (12) arbitrators. (80%) of agreement amongst arbitrators was taken as a criterion for the appropriateness of the items.

The instrument's reliability:

The indicators of the reliability of the scale were verified by using test-retest on a sample that consisted of (30) mothers from the study population, and outside its sample; two weeks separated between the two tests, and the reliability coefficient was (0.83). The reliability coefficient was also calculated using Cronbach alpha for internal consistency, and was about (0.91).

The researchers prepared the religious psychological counseling after reviewing a number of counseling programs. The main objective of program is to reduce the psychological stressors among the mothers of the mentally-disabled children in Al-Karak governorate. The program in its final image consisted of (16) sessions, with a period of an hour for each session and one session a week. Here is a brief description of each session after.

The program sessions:

The first session: a preface, recognition and definition of the counseling program.

The second session: recognizing the concept of mental disability, identifying the characteristics of the mentally-disabled individuals, the causes of mental disability, and the methods of preventing mental disability.

The third session: identifying the concept of psychological stressors among individuals in general, determining the forms of psychological stressors, and the causes and resources of psychological stressors.

The fourth session: identifying the most important problems resulting from the existence of a disabled child in the family, finding out the most important situations leading to psychological stressors based on the experiences of mothers, and attempting to find initial solutions to the problems resulting from the existence of a disabled child in the family.

The fifth session: informing the individuals of the counseling group about the strategies of problem-solving and the way of determining it, as well as the way of selecting objectives and helping the members of the group to give details about some of the problems that faced them.

The sixth and seventh sessions: identifying the daily life skills represented by independence skills, self-care, the child's ability to perform the daily life skills, and explaining the importance of the disabled ability to do the daily life skills.

The eighth session: identifying the importance of believing in fate and destiny, and telling the mothers that all people have their own problems and that no one is free from problems; promoting self-acceptance and life satisfaction.

The ninth session: identifying the importance of promoting communication by following the positive examples in their behaviors based on Islamic perspective, and identifying the behaviors leading to supportive communication.

The tenth session: counseling the clients to imagine the virtues of Allah, thank Him for the blessings, get along with pain and get training about the freedom of expressing feelings.

The eleventh session: demonstrating the importance of supplicating to Allah and its impact individuals, as well as promoting the ethical and religious aspects and strengthening belief in the heart.

The twelfth session: the ability to control self, take responsibility, believing in the pillars of Islam and being committed to the legal duties.

The thirteenth session: the importance of depending on the Holy Quran and prophetic Sunna to overcome the crisis and supporting that with Quranic verses and Hadith.

The fourteenth session: acknowledging the importance of psychological and physical prayers and their impact on reducing crises, asking for support from Allah, and supplicating to Him to mitigate stressors.

The fifteenth session: looking at crises and threats as positive events and demonstrating the importance of talking about crises positively.

The sixteenth session: concluding session.

These sessions are held via lectures, discussion, counseling, confrontation, relaxation, promotion, meditation, emotional release, modeling, positive imagination and citing more supportive examples from the Holy Quran and prophetic Sunna.

The study procedures:

The researcher determined the number of the families with mentally-disabled children in Al-Karak governorate according to the records of social development directorate and restricted their addresses.

The researchers communicated with the manager of Mu'tah center for special education to prepare the suitable place for the sessions.

The application procedures took place between May, 2013 and October, 2013, where the researchers met with the clients on Thursdays.

The study results:

The results relating to the study hypothesis stating that " there is a statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the counseling program on reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the mentally-disabled children".

In order to test the hypothesis, the means and standard deviations were calculated for the experimental group and control group for the pre and post-tests. Table (1) shows the results.

Table (1)

The means and standard deviations for the variable of the counseling program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the children with mental disability

Group	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Experimental	104.0	11.76	147.00	12.93
Control	91.15	13.40	121.45	21.77

Table (1) shows that the mean scores for the experimental group individuals in the pre-test was (104), whereas the mean scores for the experimental group individuals in the post-test was (147). The mean scores for the control group individuals in the pre-test was (91.15), whereas the mean scores for the experimental group individuals in the post-test was (121.45). we can see that there are apparent differences between the mean scores of pre and post-application for the two groups. In order to detect the differences, (ANCOVA) was used. Table (2) shows the results.

Table (2)

The analysis of covariance for the impact of the program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the children with mental disability

Source of variance	Scores	Sum	Mean	f-value	Sig. level
Pre-measurement	1	2614.437	2614.437	10.108	*0.003
Intra group	1	2282.412	2282.412	8.824	*0.005
Intergroup	37	9570.513	258.663		
Total	39	14467.362			

*statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

The results showed that the program contributes to reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the children with mental disability due to the increase of the calculated f-value from the tabulated value at (0.01), where the calculated f-value was (8.824). according to the means, we can see that the differences were in favor of the experimental group. These results indicate the effectiveness of the counseling program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the children with mental disability.

Discussing the results and recommendations:

The results revealed the impact of the counseling program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the experimental group to whom the counseling program was applied. The results of analysis for the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-measurement revealed that there is an impact for the program in reducing the level of psychological stressors among the mothers of the children with mental disability after applying the counseling program in favor of the experimental group to whom the counseling program was applied, where the mean of the psychological stressors for the control group was (121.45), whereas the mean of the psychological stressors for the experimental group was (147).

The results revealed the effectiveness of the used counseling program in reducing these stressors. The results indicate that the individuals of the experimental group scored higher on the post-measurements in comparison with the individuals of the control group; meaning that the individuals of the experimental group utilized from the information provided by the program through lectures, group discussions, brochures, confrontation, , relaxation, promotion, meditation, emotional release, modeling, positive imagination and citing more supportive examples from the Holy Quran and prophetic Sunna, in addition to enhancing the possibility of getting along with stressful events, and attending sessions in the centers of special education. The results addressed the information related to mental disability its concept, causes, classification, the characteristics of the mentally-disabled individuals and the way of dealing with them.

The effectiveness of the counseling program is attributed to addressing the problems faced by the mothers of the children with mental disability and explaining the causes leading to stress, considering them as stressful events.

The counseling program revealed that the mothers lack the information about disability in general, and mental disability in particular. The counseling program includes an educational information, addresses the negative ideas related to the stressful situations and attempts to change them into positive ideas.

The effectiveness of the used counseling program is also enhanced by allowing the mothers to express their feelings towards the problems facing them during their living with the mentally-disabled child. In some sessions relating to problem-solving, the counseling program included skills that covered several aspects leading to psychological

stressors. It included a determination of the problems, their objectives, the desire to get to a solution, set alternatives, and choose the appropriate alternative.

The study results agreed with the other reviewed studies about the effectiveness of the used counseling programs in reducing psychological stressors.

The study recommended the necessity of applying similar programs to other family individuals, not just mothers, as well as applying that to other categories other than those suffering from mental disability.

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