

The Effectiveness of a Guidance Program Using Self-Regulation Techniques in Reducing Social Isolation Among Widowed Women

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Abstract:

This study examines the effectiveness of a self-regulation-focused mentoring program in reducing social isolation among widowed women. The research explores the psychological challenges faced by widows, such as social isolation, grief, and identity loss, which can lead to psychological issues.

The primary objectives are to evaluate the impact of self-regulation on social isolation and to introduce a support program aimed at alleviating this common issue among widowed women. The study's significance is underscored by the urgent need to support widows, who often face societal pressures and traditions that worsen their isolation. Additionally, the study aims to influence social work and psychological counseling professionals, as well as policymakers.

This study employs an experimental research design with a pretest-posttest control group approach to sample widows from the Basra Governorate in Iraq. The research instrument is a social isolation scale validated through expert evaluation and statistical analysis.

Results from post-test and follow-up evaluations show that the self-regulation program significantly reduces social isolation among widowed women.¹ The study concludes that the guidance program is effective in mitigating the vulnerability of widowed women to social isolation.

The research recommends extending the counseling program to other groups experiencing social isolation and investigating the relationship between social isolation and life satisfaction among widowed women. To enhance the well-being of widowed women, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing social isolation and proposes the guidance program as a viable intervention.

Keywords: Social Isolation, Widowed Women, Self-Regulation, Guidance Program, Psychological Well-being, Experimental Research Design, Iraq.

Introduction

Background

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1444/2023 AD

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The study of women's conditions has gained increased attention recently, recognizing their vital role in society. Today, women face a variety of pressures and changes in their responsibilities amidst growing societal issues. The death of a husband significantly impacts a woman's psychological health by depriving her of companionship and exposing her to psychological illnesses due to the emotional strain of losing a life partner. This experience is often unbearable for the emotionally fragile wife, whose emotions drive her most. Consequently, she may remain ensnared in grief for an extended period, grappling with a multitude of psychological factors. These factors include feelings of shock, the urge to weep, and a simultaneous inclination towards silence, coupled with an obsessive quest for a new identity.

These burdensome experiences afflict women as soon as they are labeled as "widows," stripping them of their societal standing. As women are pivotal components of any society, they inevitably encounter such challenging situations, particularly the pressures stemming from household responsibilities, child-rearing duties, and the need to provide solace to the family. Their continual exposure to these pressures plunges them into a vortex of psychological turmoil, conflicts, and discontent with their lives, thereby undermining their capacity to cope with the various demands and roles they encounter daily. Consequently, they find themselves isolated from society and others. The problem of the current research is exemplified by the following questions:

Does the self-regulatory style have an impact on the social isolation of widowed women?
Is there social isolation for widowed women?

The current research will answer the above questions.

Research Significance

Our study of the issue of social isolation enables us to comprehend and subsequently address it among widowed women. Social isolation is intricately linked to other challenges such as life hardships, inadequate personality adjustment, and emotional disturbances within the family. Moreover, most isolated individuals fail to assimilate the values of others and struggle to express their own viewpoints. It is imperative for women to establish connections with groups of relatives and neighbors; otherwise, they may remain isolated for prolonged periods. The feeling of isolation arises from individuals' endeavors to develop their personalities independently of the human collective. One truly comprehends their personality, uniqueness, and differentiation from others only in solitude. The isolated individual tends to limit their circle of friends, favoring solitude over social interactions and contemplating their work. They keenly feel the absence of belonging in large societies, and their heightened sensitivity often leads them to fear ridicule and mockery. Consequently, they refrain from showcasing their talents due to uncertainty, resulting in lesser achievements compared to their peers.

According to Seligman (1983), the phenomenon of social isolation has become pervasive across various segments of society, permeating the lives of individuals regardless of age, marital status, socioeconomic status, education level, health condition, or personality type. It manifests itself at all stages of life and is widely recognized as a fundamental aspect for comprehending numerous psychological phenomena. This notion is corroborated by Al-Ghamdi (2020, p. 1482), who emphasizes the profound impact of individual beliefs on the experience of social isolation.

Iraqi society imposes on women a bitter reality in all its details, which is manifested in ceremonies and rituals that oblige women to isolate, remain silent, avoid others, close the borders of the family, and other measures that lead to limited social activities and to dealing with grief in privacy that works to include their problem and threaten their psychological security and mental and physical health. It is also related to the general social situation that society (women and widowed women) have pushed in particular.

Among the psychological, social, and economic factors contributing to this phenomenon are feelings of isolation, introversion, and financial hardship, as well as a sense of helplessness, vulnerability, and insecurity. Following the death of a husband,

widows often experience psychological and emotional emptiness as they grapple with fears about their own future and the future of their children. These feelings of weakness and material insecurity can lead to significant psychological pressure, impairing their ability to adequately care for their children.

The loss of a husband poses a significant threat to Iraqi women, as it creates a profound social, economic, psychological, and health vacuum and upheaval, affecting both the widow and the deceased's family. In such circumstances, women often find themselves subject to societal norms and traditions, characterized by negative attitudes toward women, and may face persecution, discrimination, and exploitation from the surrounding society.

Here lies the importance of the research, where the researcher decided to reveal the most important social problems facing widowed women as they represent the nucleus of society and the basis of its growth and development through preparing and raising generations. The importance of the research is exemplified by the following:

- 1- Provide them with material and moral support and support and enable them to face their problems or difficulties in their lives.
- 1- Shedding light on an important segment of society that needs different and varied programs that provide them with self-reliance and get rid of social isolation.
- 2- The attention of the officials of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security is directed towards the care of widows.
- 3- For the current study, the importance of the recommendations we propose for workers in the field of psychological and family counseling and social researchers in the courts.
- 4- The current research is a scientific reference for graduate students in the field of psychological counseling and educational guidance.

Research Objective

The current study aims to:

- Determine the effectiveness of self-regulation in reducing the social isolation of widows.

From the research objective, the researcher derived the following hypotheses:

- 1-The self-regulation program affects the reduction of social isolation over time among widows.
- 2-There are no statistically significant differences between the hypothetical mean and the arithmetic mean of the sample members in social isolation.

Limitations

The current research is limited to widowed women in the Directorate General of Education of Basra Governorate/ Center of the Republic of Iraq for the year 2023-2024.

Identifying terms

First: Style

Defined by Vernon as a cognitive activity in which individual differences appear in how mental abilities are performed (1973: p125). While Sadiq and Hammoud, (2023: 30) define style as an organized scheme in the light of scientific foundations to provide direct and indirect counseling services individually or socially to everyone included in the institution in order to help him achieve normal growth and psychological, social and professional harmony.

Theoretical definition of the method taken by the researcher in the light of scientific foundations that helps him to reach the study of what is included in the research.

Second: Self-regulation:

Defined by Bandura (2005: 3) moral behavior that includes doing things that come with self-satisfaction and a sense of self-worth. Baggs (2015: p.8) defines Self-regulation as an active process that demonstrates an individual's capacity to control and modify their

behavior and environment to achieve goals through planning, goal-setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, self-enhancement, and controlling external stimuli. It reflects the individual's ability to consciously prevent a predetermined response in anticipation of unfavorable outcomes, indicating the suppression of emotions, desires, and self-judgment. While Al-Zuwaini (2018: p.180) states it as the process of self-direction through which the individual transforms his mental abilities and transfers them to skills related to the performance of tasks (Al-Zuwaini, 2018, p. 18).

Practical definition: In this study, the effect of self-regulation is used during (12) sessions according to the study plan, the duration of the sessions is (90) minutes and based on Pandora's theory.

3.Social isolation:

Defined by Zagher (2017): The extent to which the individual feels loneliness, isolation from others and distance from them, the low rate of communication with them, and the small number of acquaintances, which leads to the weakness of the network of social relations to which he belongs (Zagher, 2017, p. 241) .

_ **Al-Subhi (2020)** as: "Behavior in the individual is characterized by weakness or lack of social relations or friendship with others and interaction with them, to the extent of hatred of contact with others and incompatibility with them, and away from living the reality of the surrounding environment and indifference to what is happening in it (Al-Subhi, 2020, p. 340).

- **Theoretical definition of social isolation:** In this study, it is the behavior of a widowed woman who feels sad and bored because of her inability to build new friendships, her withdrawal from the social environment in which she lives, and her isolation from others.

- Practical Definition:

Social isolation: The current study is procedurally determined by the scores obtained by the members of the core study sample on the scale (social isolation) designed and used in the study.

Fourth: Integrative Interaction: Defined by:

- **Berne (1961):** A formula for individual and collective psychotherapy that focuses on interaction and games and on analyzing social relations through the transfer of ego cases between the roles of (father- child -adult). (Patterson, 1990, p. 285).

- **Al-Azza and Abdul Hadi (1999):** It is the natural situation that must prevail in the interactions between people, which is a continuous, harmonious, smooth, gentle and calm interaction (Al-Azza and Abdul Hadi , 1999, p. 64) .

- **Abu Asaad, and Arabiyat (2013):** A response from the case of the Anna to whom the letter was addressed and returned to the same case of the Anna who sent the letter, such as the message from I am the adult to I am the adult of the other individual. (Abu Asaad and Arabiyat, 2013, p. 362).

Theoretical Descriptive

Social isolation

Several researchers have compiled a paper encompassing numerous and diverse concepts regarding the phenomenon of social isolation. They defined various aspects of social cohesion and the development of familiarity, exploring their impacts on individuals and criteria for managing these relationships. The paper reviewed these aspects

comprehensively along with different perspectives on the topic. From this analysis, various social phenomena, behavioral norms, and numerous social issues emerged. Additionally, there was a debate, albeit inadequately elucidated, regarding the measurement of social cohesion and the development of familiarity. The researchers laid a robust foundation for interpreting international standards across several dimensions of social isolation. Numerous societal factors prevalent in society significantly influence an individual's condition, including economic disparity, social capital, cohesion, and cultural coherence. These factors must be considered when assessing aspects of social isolation in individuals (Filipe et al., 2017, p. 11).

As for the individual's attitude towards isolation, it takes two different directions with each other. Widows who feel comfortable and happy when they are isolated with themselves and away from others in order to achieve the desired self-image, while others feel embarrassed, uncomfortable and constantly anxious may achieve value for themselves in this situation or vice versa when they see the reactions of their peers towards them.

When individuals are unable to establish normal relationships with society due to their dissatisfaction with its laws, customs, and traditions, or when society does not accommodate their tendencies, interests, goals, and values, they may feel distant, alienated, and isolated. Social isolation is characterized by individuals withdrawing from external interactions and preferring to create an internal world for themselves instead of engaging with a broader social environment. Social psychologists attribute this phenomenon to several factors:

- The social distance in which the individual distanced himself from others psychologically.
- The extent of the individual's motivation to engage in integrated social relationships with others.
- The social support provided by others to the individual, which reduces the social distance between him and the social contact with others and increases his motivation (Mahmoud, 2022: 362).

"If an individual feel that the community they belong to, whether it's their family or peer group, fails to fulfill their needs, they may seek separation from them, resorting to isolation as a means of doing so," Maslow explains. This lack of friends and supporters can lead to difficulties in areas such as integration, love, and forming bonds with others. The stress and psychological pressure experienced by widowed women may impact their family and social life, potentially leading to new crises or exacerbating existing ones. They may feel as if they are imprisoned, unable to remain in the place they once called home and where they wished to live (Greenberg, 2008, p. 190-191).

Social isolation is also a social danger, as it hinders the formation of social relations with others and makes it difficult to communicate and start talking, in addition to fear of others and the lack of social skills, which leads to emotional and social distancing from others. It also represents a psychological danger to widowed women and shows psychological problems such as high symptoms of depression and low levels of self, in addition to feeling helpless, loss of sense of security, anger, poor self-confidence and feeling of pressure in most life situations.

Social isolation

Scientists or doctors do not clearly know the reasons that lead to social isolation or social fear, but they are believed to be due to a number of environmental or genetic factors, and the reasons for social isolation are as follows: (Bitar, 2018: 20).

1. Being bullied or persecuted as a child by parents or friends.
2. Suffering from family conflict, large family problems, or being in the middle of these conflicts.
3. Exposure to violence or sexual abuse at a young age.
4. Physical problems such as an imbalance in the secretion of serotonin, a chemical that helps regulate and improve mood, may result.

5. There is an increase in the stimulation of the amygdala, and a part of the brain works to control the response to fear and anxiety, and this stimulation can lead to some psychological disorders, including social isolation.

6. Children may become socially isolated as a result of observing the behavior or behaviors of their parents with this disorder, or one of the causes of children with this disorder can be the presence of children in a controlled, severe, or overprotective environment that is practiced by parents.

– Types of isolation:

There are three types of isolation:

(a) Isolation between a personality resulting from the inability to build relationships with others.

(b) Isolation within the person and here he is isolated from parts of himself using defense tricks.

(c) Existential isolation, that is, the isolation of the individual from existence, which are two parts:

Section 1: Ability to confront and move towards others and then mental health.

The second section: The inability to confront and not to turn towards others and then psychological disorder, and the lack of existence appears in physical death and the sense of alienation, emptiness, isolation and loneliness, and isolation leads to the existential emptiness or feeling that the individual goes through and loses the meaning of pain or the existence of the self and the experiences that he goes through become meaningless and it leads to a state of constant anxiety (Abu Asaad and Arabiyat, 2015: 334).

There are several indicators of social isolation behavior that he mentioned (Kharbash, et al., 2018: 89), as follows:

1. Poor social adjustment of the individual in his relations with others.
2. Avoidance of social contacts by the individual.
3. Freezing his circle of social interaction.
4. Inability to develop or maintain relations of friendship and neighborliness.
5. The escape of the individual from the reality of the social to the world of self.
- 6 The individual has adopted a cognitive structure to the effect that others have neglected or ignored them because they were cut off from them for a period of time.

Theories that explained social isolation:

There are several theories that explain social isolation, including:

Jeng's Theory (Jeng1953)

The analytical perspective suggests that an individual's psychological growth is shaped by the social factors that surround them. According to Jung, there are two models of the individual's relationship with society: the open model, where the individual is interested in external events, and the introverted model, where the individual focuses on themselves, leading to negativity and isolation when interacting with the social environment. Adler adds that feelings of isolation in individuals stem from inadequate parenting during adolescence, resulting in a lack of love, kindness, and encouragement. This deprivation contributes to feelings of inferiority due to a lack of social experiences and sensitivity (Keneth et al., 1999, p. 95).

Pandora: Social Learning Theory

The behavior of isolation in humans is a failure to learn the most appropriate ways to deal with people. Bandura emphasizes that there are multiple factors that affect isolationist behavior, including the nature of the observed model or the individual's lack of learned social skills. He also believes that there are other factors that can affect isolationist behavior, including environmental factors and personal factors.

Pessimistic and defeatist explanations and irrational thinking about oneself, people and events contribute to the isolation of the individual and his withdrawal from social relations (Al-Masri, 1994: 6).

Pandora posits that many behavioral patterns are acquired through observational learning, where individuals observe and internalize symbolic representations of actions or models. Learned behaviors are stored in memory and utilized as guides for future actions. The decision to engage or not in a certain behavior is influenced by the expected outcomes. Isolated individuals tend to distance themselves from social interactions as they anticipate that such behavior will alleviate tension and anxiety. Individuals are inclined to learn behaviors that aid in self-adaptation and societal integration due to their perceived value (Al-Issawi, 2000: 270-271).

Bandura stresses the possibility of developing emotional responses by observing these responses in others, whether pleasant or painful, and regulating their behavior to a large extent by visualizing the results they may generate themselves (Abdulhadi, 2000 :257).

Pandora focused on four areas of research, as follows:

- 1- The power of psychological modeling in influencing thinking, emotion and performance.
- 2- The methods that people use to influence their motivations and behavior through choice.
3. People are aware of their ability to influence events that affect their lives.
- 4- How reactions occur, anxiety, tension and depression, and thus (Pandora) produced his theory, which is still influential even at the present time, and showed that people need to feel self-efficacy and easy adaptation in order to enjoy a life full of success and to face the isolation behavior and obstacles and zigzags facing them (Corey, 2011: 305).

If the observer sees the model rewarded for the behavior he is exposed to, he tends to imitate it. If he becomes in a situation where punishment for his imitated behavior is not expected, the likelihood of imitation increases. Even if he learns of the results of the model's behavior without seeing them, the results tend to remain. Reward and punishment affect the observer's responses in the same way that they affect the response of the model (Abdul Hadi, 2000: 261).

Bandura posits that these models influence not only observed behavior but also cognitive processes related to it. The impact of the model lies not in dictating what actions we take but in directing our attention, shaping our perception, and guiding our focus. Social behavior is thus simulated by models during interpersonal interactions, influencing individuals' cognitive processes and subsequent actions (Schultz, 1983: 399).

Learning theory explains that man has the ability to anticipate outcomes before they occur and this expectation influences the orientation of social behavior (Malika, 1989: 32).

Previous studies

-Study (Coelho,al. et 2017)

Title: "The Effectiveness of Employing a Multimedia Facebook-based Program in Reducing Social Isolation in the Elderly."

Objective of the study: The study aimed to identify the impact of multimedia Facebook as a model based on television programs for the elderly, and its role in encouraging social interactions on the Internet to alleviate the social isolation of the elderly.

Tool: The researcher asked questions to the sample members through the interview.

Sample: The study adopted the experimental approach based on the case study. The study sample consisted of (3) elderly people, ranging in age from (65-73) years, who have experience of using Facebook, during a period of (3-6) weeks.

Results: The results reached the effectiveness of the use of multimedia Facebook in alleviating the social isolation of the researchers, as the results showed the high rate of interaction of the respondents with relatives, and the interactions increased in general on the Internet when the program was implemented. (Coelho,al.et 2017)

-Al-Subaihawi Study (2020).

Title: The effectiveness of my art of positive self-talk and familiarity is to reduce the behavior of social isolation among middle school students.

- **Objective:** - Identifying the behavior of social isolation among middle school students.

- Building a program based on two guiding techniques (positive self-talk and (forming familiarity) in reducing the isolation behavior of middle school students.

Tool: The researcher built the scale consisting of (40) paragraphs, according to Horney's theory, which consists of three areas (absence of friendship (13), mixing with others (12) and loneliness (15).

- The **sample:** It consisted of (200) students from preparatory schools in the Directorate of Education in Basra/the center.

-**Results:** The study found that middle school students have isolation behavior and modify and reduce unwanted behaviors that students suffer from (Al-Sabihawi,2020).

-Study (2020) Noguchi-et-al.:

Title: The relationship between social isolation and the onset of depression in older adults, a cross-national longitudinal study in England and Japan.

Study Objectives: At an older age. However, little is known regarding whether its impact varies depending on the culture specific to each country and the contexts related to social relations. Present The study examined the association of social isolation with the emergence of depression among older people in England, which took advanced action against social isolation, and Japan, an aging society with a rapidly increasing number of socially isolated people. Design a longitudinal prospective study.

Tool: Preparation We used data from two ongoing studies: English Longitudinal Study of Aging (Elsa) and the Japan Ageing Assessment Study (JAGES). Elderly participants aged ≥ 65 years without depression was followed primarily in relation to the onset of depression for two years (2010/2011-2012/2013) Elsa and 2.5 years (2010/2011-2013) for JAGES. Primary score measurement Depression was evaluated with eight items from the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Elsa and Aging Depression Scale for JAGES. Multivariate logistic regression The analysis was performed to assess the social isolation of the sample: using multiple parameters (marital status; interaction with children, relatives and friends. and social engagement).

Results: Data from 3331 respondents from Elsa and 33127 from JAGES were analyzed. Multivariate logistic regression analysis revealed that social isolation was significantly associated with the onset of depression in both countries. In Elsa, poor interaction with children showed a marginal association with the onset of depression, while in JAGES, poor interaction with children and lack of social engagement significantly influenced the onset of depression. Conclusions: Despite differences in cultural backgrounds, social isolation was associated with the onset of depression in both English studies (Noguchi et al., 2020).

- Al-Shammari Study (2023):

Title: Digital Illiteracy and its Relationship to Social Isolation in Older Adults

Objectives of the study: The study aimed to identify digital illiteracy and its relationship to social isolation among the elderly.

Tool: The researcher relied on previous studies in building the scale as a study (Obeidat et al., 2020). The scale consists of (41) paragraphs and five alternatives (strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, never disagree).

Sample: This study is one of the descriptive studies, which relied on the social survey approach in the method of the purposive sample, on (130) elderly men and women aged (60) years and above, who are frequent visitors to the King Salman Social Center in Riyadh.

Findings: The results of the study found a low level of digital illiteracy and social isolation among older people, in addition to that there is a positive correlation between social isolation and the level of digital illiteracy; that is, with a low level of digital illiteracy of knowledge and skills for older people, their level of social isolation decreases. The study also recommended the need to change the perception of older people's use of modern technology from being an entertainment method only to a means to enhance the quality of life of older people (Al-Shammari 2023).

This research includes a description of the research method and the experimental design followed by the researcher, as well as a description of the research community, its sample, the research tool to measure social isolation, the procedures of the guidance program, the effectiveness of the self-organization method, and the statistical means used in processing statistical data, as follows:

First: Research Methodology: Research Methodology

Experimental research is one of the most precise scientific methods as it can establish hypotheses for cause and effect. This method is highly reliable in addressing educational and psychological issues, involving deliberate and controlled alterations to specific conditions of reality and phenomena under investigation, to observe resulting effects. The objective of experimental research is to understand and analyze the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable in question. Researchers implement a series of protocols to ensure proper execution of the experiment, including controls such as timing, location, and environmental conditions, while also managing extraneous factors that could influence the experiment. Researchers are tasked with overseeing all aspects of the experiment except for the variable under investigation (Al-Jabri, 2011: 306).

Therefore, the researcher used the experimental method for its scientific and research importance.

The experimental method involves a series of structured steps:

- Identify the problem and determine its characteristics.

Research hypotheses:

- Developing an experimental design that includes the results, selecting samples, identifying and controlling the influencing factors, and determining the means of measurement.
- Organize and define the data well and then implement the experiment. Al-Atabi and Al-Hiti (2011)

Second: Experimental Design: Experimental Design

The experimental design is a scheme and program prepared to conduct the experiment according to the controls and factors surrounding the phenomenon to be studied scientifically and then follow up on what is happening (Abdul Rahman, 2007: 486).

The goal of experimental research is to form a causal relationship between research variables by designing the experimental situation.

Since the researcher adopted the design of the two experimental groups and the control group, this design requires the following steps:

1. Determine (20) widows who obtained scores higher than the hypothetical average of (60) social isolation score when applying the pre-test on the scale.
2. Distribute the research sample in a simple random manner to (the experimental and control group) equally by (20) widows in each group.
3. Conducting a pre-test for the experimental and control group to measure the social isolation of widows.
4. Equivalence of the two groups in the variables of the pre-test scores on the scale of social isolation in (age, type of housing, level of economic income).
5. Using the self-regulation guidance method with the group members, and the control group was not exposed to any guidance method.
6. Conducting a post-test after the completion of the counseling program and a deferred test (follow-up) one month after the end of the counseling program on the scale of social isolation; in order to know the differences and their significance and the effectiveness of the counseling method in reducing social isolation. After this stage, the widows in the experimental group received (12) group counseling sessions.

Sample

The research community consists of widows of all (445) primary schools in the Directorate General of Education of Basra Governorate/Center Department/for the academic year (2023-2024).

Demographic variables of the research sample: (age, type of housing, level of economic income).

Criteria for accepting participants: (Female gender only, widows, to be residents of Basra Center exclusively, the year of widowhood, adherence to the program instructions, not to leave the sessions, she does not have an obligation to another counselor or other treatment).

Research samples:

It is a part or segment of society that includes the characteristics of the indigenous community whose characteristics we want to identify, and this sample must be properly representative of all members of this community (Al-Zuhairi 2017 : 54). Table(1) shows this.

Table (1)Samples used in the current research

ON	Samples used	Number of individuals
1	Exploratory study:	10
2	Statistical Analysis	100
3	Sample Experiment	20
4	Steady	20
Total		150

- Exploratory sample: Exploratory sample

The exploratory sample was chosen with the aim of knowing the clarity of the paragraphs and the degree of understanding the instructions of the scale and determining the time taken to answer. It will be mentioned in the application of the paragraphs of the scale to a representative and appropriate sample. Their number reached (10) widows and the arithmetic average time was (12) minutes approximately.

- Sample statistical analysis

The preferred framework in the statistical analysis process is the sample capacity and size, wherein a larger sample size reduces the likelihood of standard error (Ebell, 1972, p.73). For the purpose of conducting statistical analysis on the social isolation scale, the researcher selected a sample of 100 widows from primary school teachers in the central education sector of Basra. The aim of using this sample is to ascertain statistical indicators, as well as the validity and reliability of the scale.

Sample application of the pilot program:

The test was applied to the social isolation scale (20) widows and was randomly selected. After the test was conducted and the forms were corrected, they were arranged in descending order and the forms that were higher than the hypothetical medium of social isolation (60) were determined. (20) questionnaires were randomly drawn as an experimental group and a control group of (20) widows for each group.

- Experience Sample:

After applying the measure of social isolation adopted by the researcher based on the Mubarak scale (2008) and the hypothetical medium of (60) for social isolation, it became clear that widows who had a decrease in social isolation and according to the degree of severance, their number was (20) widows.

Fifth: Equivalence of the three Groups: The Efficiency of the three Groups

- The process of ensuring equivalence between the experimental and control groups is a necessary step undertaken by the researcher. This involves controlling all variables and fundamental factors believed to influence the dependent variable in the experiment, except for one factor that the researcher manipulates, known as the independent variable. This ensures internal consistency in the research experiment and yields accurate results. Equivalence between the two groups (experimental and control) is established based on several variables drawn from the literature, theoretical assumptions, and previous studies, which may act as extraneous variables affecting the experimental variable. Group members were assessed on various variables related to the measure of social isolation, including age, type of housing, and level of economic income. A specific form was prepared and distributed to both the experimental and control samples (see Appendix for details). The following outlines the procedures for achieving statistical equivalence between the experimental and control groups:

- **Sample scores on the Social Isolation Scale Pre-test**

To ensure the equivalence of the three groups in the social isolation variable, the scores were converted to ranks and the Kruskal-Wallis test was used. The calculated value was equal to (1,635) and the tabular value was equal to (5.99) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (2), which is not significant, which indicates the equivalence of the three groups in the degrees of self-regulation on the scale of social isolation and Table (2) shows this.

Table (2)The result of the Kruskal-Wallis test of equivalence in the variable of the scores of the measure of social isolation of the groups

Group	Number	Total ranks	FS-3 Average level	Degree of Freedom	Significance level
Control group	20	995	26.65	2	Not significant
First Experimental Group	20	999	10:31:28		

Age

Your text looks great! Just a minor adjustment for clarity:

"To ensure equivalence among the three groups regarding the social isolation variable, scores were converted to ranks, and the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied. The calculated value was 1.635, which did not exceed the tabular value of 5.99 at the significance level of 0.05, with 2 degrees of freedom. This lack of significance indicates the equivalence of the three groups in terms of self-regulation degrees on the social isolation scale. Table 2 illustrates this finding."

Schedule3

The result of the K2 test for parity in the age variable in years for the three groups

Group	Age in years			Number	Degree of Freedom	Significance level
	25-34	35-44	45e more			
Control group	3	8	9	20	2	Not significant
First Experimental Group	2	9	9	20		
Second Experimental Group	3	9	8	20		
Total				60		

Type of residence: (property, rent)

For the purpose of ensuring the equivalence of the experimental and control groups in the housing type variable, the members of the three groups were calculated, then the researcher used the chi-square test, and the calculated value was (1,12) and the tabular value was (5,99) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (2), which is not statistically significant, which indicates the equivalence of the three groups in this variable, and Table (4) shows this.

Table (4) The result of the Ka squared test for equivalence in the housing type variable for the three groups

Group	Type of housing		Number	Degree of Freedom	Significance level
	King	Kirahk			
Control group	18	2	20	2	Not significant
Experimental group	17	3	20		

Income Level

To verify the equality of the experimental and control group widows in the economic income level variable, the researcher used the **Ka² square test**, as the calculated value of the **Ka² square test** was (1,00) smaller than the tabular value of (5,99) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a spear degree (2), which is not statistically significant, indicating the equality of widowed women for the experimental group and the control group in the economic income level variable. Table (5) shows this:

Table (5)The result of the Ka² square test of equivalence in the economic income variable of the three groups

Group	Income			Number	Degree of Freedom	Significance level
	Weak	Medium	Good.			
Control group	3	12	5	20	4	Not significant
Experimental group	2	14	4	20		
Total				40		

Research Tools: Research Instruments

In this research, the following tools are used to measure the required variables. For the purpose of achieving the objectives of the current research, the Mubarak scale (2008) for social isolation was adopted.

Social isolation scale

The researcher adopted the Mubarak scale for social isolation (2008) after reviewing a number of scales, including the Nashi scale (2009), the Shammari scale (2010), and the Abu Aita and Sheikh scale (2017). The researcher adopted the Mubarak scale for social isolation (2008) for the following reasons:

The researcher found that the scale is the most appropriate for the objectives of the current research, and it is the latest where it was built in the year (2019).

The scale has psychometric properties (validity, reliability) and demonstrates its ability to measure the phenomenon, as well as the comprehensiveness of the scale's paragraphs on social isolation. Moreover, the relevance of the scale's paragraphs to the current research sample is noteworthy. The study sample in the Mubarak study, which focused on widowed women, aligns with the current research sample of widows in the Directorate of Education in Basra, the Center.

The scale consists of (20) paragraphs and the answer to the questionnaire paragraphs is located in five alternatives: (I agree with it a lot, I agree with it, I am not sure, I do not agree with it, I do not agree with it a lot). Correction estimates are given in the event that the paragraphs are positive (5) to (1), and vice versa in the event that the paragraphs are negative and Appendix (2).

Statistical analysis of scale paragraphs holds great importance for ensuring the accuracy and stability of research results across all disciplines. No scientific study is complete without statistical analysis. According to Abdulaziz (2014: 89), the goal of such analysis is to retain high-quality paragraphs that accurately measure the intended constructs (Ebell, 1972, p. 313). Paragraphs exhibiting discriminative power should be preserved, as they distinguish between high and low scores. Conversely, paragraphs lacking discriminative power should be removed from the final scale (Tyler, 1989: 109).

The statistical properties of the social isolation scale were assessed as follows: From a sample of 100 widows, the scale was administered, and responses were ranked in descending order. The upper and lower extreme groups, comprising 27% each (27 widows), were identified. Subsequently, a two-sample t-test was conducted to determine significant differences between these groups' scores on each scale paragraph. It was found that 20 paragraphs exhibited significance at the 0.05 level, as the calculated t-values exceeded the tabular t-value for 52 degrees of freedom (2.01). See Table 6 for details.

Table (6) Discriminatory Strength of Social Isolation Scale Paragraphs

ON	Upper Group		Lower Group		T value	Significance level
	Center	Standard	Center	Standard		
1	4500	0,78283	- 9500	1,10824	653	Significant
2	4 802 4000	0,67178	- 9500	0,95943	13,230.	Significant
3	3750	0,89693	6500	0,69982	149	Significant
4	4,2000	0,91147	1	1,04237	10,620	Significant
5	4250	0,95776	0250	0,99968	10,964	Significant
6	4750	0,84694	1 to 9000	0,95542	755	Significant
7	3,000	1,15913	.8500	16685	9,421	Significant
8	3,000	0,99228	1.	1,06669	10,527	Significant
9	3,000	1,04268	1.	0,91111	11-076	Significant
10	3750	1.00480	1.	0,96986	11,493	Significant
11	4 802 4000	0,84124	1	0,84391	994	Significant
12	4 802 4000	87119	7500	0,86972	13,615	Significant
13	4 802 4000	90014	- 9500	01147	11,444	Significant
14	4750	78406	2.0000	0,87706	306	Significant
15	4750	0,81610	1.	T 87376	.018	Significant
16	5250	0,75064	1.	13652	305	Significant
17	4.3500	0,92126	.8000	0,93918	12.259	Significant
18	5,500.	0,74936	.8000	0,82275	629	Significant
19	4.5750	0,78078	1.	1,07148	642	Significant
20	4500	0,63851	1 to 9000	1,05733	.057	Significant

Table T values with a degree of freedom (52) at a significance level (0.05).

The relationship of the paragraph score to the total score of the scale:

It means finding the correlation between the degree of each paragraph in the scale and its total score (Nunnally, 1978: p275). To find this, the researcher used the Pearson correlation coefficient between each paragraph and the total score of the form on the scale, and then calculated the significant significance of the correlation coefficient for each paragraph. It was shown that all of them are statistically significant when balanced by the tabular value (1,95) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (98) and Table (7) shows that.

Table (7) Values of the paragraph correlation coefficient with the total score of the measure of social isolation

on	Correlation coefficient	Significance of the correlation coefficient	ت	Correlation coefficient	Significance of the correlation coefficient
1	0.821	Significant	11	903	Significant
2	890.	Significant	12	897 	Significant
3	.905	Significant	13	.860	Significant
4	875	Significant	14	.871	Significant
5	0.876	Significant	15	0.842	Significant
6	.914	Significant	16	0.859	Significant
7	0.827	Significant	17	.858	Significant
8	0.846	Significant	18	791.	Significant
9	.852	Significant	19	861.	Significant
10	.858	Significant	20	0.848	Significant

* Table values with a degree of freedom (98) at a significance level (0.05) equal to (0,195).

❖ **Psychometric properties of the scale**

Psychometricians almost unanimously agree that the two attributes (validity and stability) are among the most important psychometric characteristics in psychometrics, although validity is more important than stability; because the correct scale may be fixed while the correct fixed scale may not be correct, as it may be homogeneous in its vertebrae, but it measures a different property from that for which the scale was prepared (Al-Kubaisi,2010: 51).

i. **Virtual validity**

This validity assesses whether the instrument effectively measures the intended behavior or provides an accurate representation of it. In other words, the instrument is considered valid if its content aligns with the behavior it aims to measure. An instrument demonstrates honesty when its content directly relates to the behavior being assessed and not to unrelated factors (Abboud, 2009: 79).

Upon adopting the scale, presenting it to experts aimed to evaluate its validity. The face validity of the scale was established by presenting its initial form, consisting of 20 paragraphs, to a panel of experts in psychological counseling, educational guidance, educational and psychological sciences, psychology, measurement, and evaluation. See Appendix 4. All experts confirmed the validity of the tool, resulting in a consensus percentage of 100%.

Consistency means consistency of results and the test is consistent if we get the same results from it when reapplying again to the same individuals and under the same conditions. (Al-Kubaisi, 2010: 52) To obtain the stability of the scale, the researcher used the following methods to find it:

Testing and Retesting

This method involves administering the scale to a group of individuals and then administering the same scale to the same group under similar conditions, with a time lapse between the two administrations (Melhem, 2000). To implement this method, the scale was administered to a sample of 20 randomly selected widows. Using the Pearson correlation coefficient, the relationship between the scores of the initial and subsequent administrations of the scale was determined. The stability coefficient was found to be 0.997 at a significance level of 0.01. Refer to Table 8 for details.

Table (8) Arithmetic mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient for testing and retesting of the social isolation scale

Sam ple	Quiz 1	Quiz 2	Correlation coefficient			tabul ar	Sig
	Mean	Stand ard deviat ion	Me an	Stand ard deviat ion			
20	Indicators of social isolation behavior	30.78 892	3,0 00	30.08 952	9 9 7	537	Signi ficant

Using the Wackeronbach equation

The researcher verified the stability of the social isolation scale using the Cronbach equation using the method of variation analysis on the research sample of (20). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale was (0,998), and this is a high indicator of stability.

Statistical indicators for the scale:

After verifying the validity of the social isolation scale, a description of this scale can be developed in terms of the value of the arithmetic mean, the mean, the standard error of the

mean, the lowest score, the highest score, the range, the standard deviation, the variation, the kurtosis, the standard error of the kink, the standard error of the kink, as well as the graph, as shown in Table (9)

Table (9) Statistical Indices

N	100
Mean	75
Arithmetic mean error	4.32956
median	0000
Mode	67
Standard deviation	19.84061
Variance	648
Winding	380
Standard error	0.501
Kurtosis	- 523
Standard error	972
Extent	46.00
The lowest score?	20.00
Peak	100

By extrapolating the statistical characteristics of the scale, it is clear that the mean, median and range value are close, indicating that the sample distribution is close to the normal distribution and that the sample is representative of the research community. Thus, the results of the current research can be generalized to the research community.

The first hypothesis: The self-regulation program affects the reduction of the social isolation of widowed women.

The results presented in Table (10) indicate a significant interaction effect between time and group for the social isolation variable ($F = 716/37, p < 0.001$). This suggests that there is a meaningful difference between social isolation levels in the self-regulation counseling program group and the control group at pre-test, which persists with a significant difference at post-test and follow-up. Thus, the first research hypothesis is confirmed. Further analysis is needed to ascertain which group, either the self-regulation counseling program group or the control group, exhibited better performance in post-test and follow-up assessments.

Table(10) Results of variance analysis and repeated measures of one variable in the pre-test, post-test and follow-up phase

Variable	Changelog	SQUARES TOTAL	Degree of Freedom	Squares mean	F	Level of Importance	Test Strength
Social isolation	time	744/20892	694	416/12335	747	001	778
	Group	14301	2	506	770	001	778
	Time Group Interaction	956	387	179	716	001	570

Ben Froni's follow-up test was used to compare the adjusted averages. Clarify the results of this test in a table (11).

Table 2 Financial resource requirements by component

The results of the Ben-Frini follow-up test were compared with the adjusted averages of social isolation in the post-test and follow-up of the experimental and control groups.

Variable	Stage	Comparison groups	Adjusted Averages	Divergence of averages	Level of Importance
Social isolation	Post – Test	Self-regulation method – control	683/56-474/89	791	001
	Follow-up	Self-regulation method –control	361/64-206/89	845	001

Hypothesis (1-1): The self-regulation counseling program affects the reduction of social isolation among widowed women.

The results displayed in the table (11) indicate a statistically significant difference between the mean adjusted scores of the social isolation group and the post-test control group (791.32, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that the self-regulation counseling group outperformed the control group in reducing social isolation among widows at the post-test stage. Thus, hypothesis 1.1 of the research has been confirmed. Additionally, the difference between the average adjusted scores of social isolation in the self-regulation counseling group and the control group at the follow-up stage is 845.24, with a statistically significant difference at the level of $p < 0.001$. This demonstrates that the effectiveness of the self-regulation guidance program in reducing the social isolation of widowed women remained consistent throughout the follow-up period. Regarding the second hypothesis, it is rejected due to the presence of statistically significant differences favoring the experimental group.

In light of the findings of the current research, conclude the following:

- Widowed women have a tendency to social isolation through the application of the two measures of research.
- The extension program is effective in reducing the social isolation of widowed women teachers.

Recommendations:

In light of the results of the current research, the researcher recommends the following: Activating the role of the extension units at the university.

- Holding guidance seminars in educational institutions to educate women and young people about the importance of organizing their lives. and steps that lead to life satisfaction and moving away from social isolation.
- The counseling program can be applied and used to collectively guide other groups who show poor social interaction.

Suggestions

1. Conducting a similar study on another sample and implementing the extension program.
2. Conducting a descriptive study of social isolation and its relationship to life satisfaction among widowed women.

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