



The Effectiveness of a Group Counseling Program on Developing Decision Making Skill of Educational Sciences Students at Counseling and Mental Health Department

Saleh Aldaheri*

Educational Research and Development,
Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan
Amman, Jordan

*Corresponding author: E-mail: salehdaheri@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a Group Counseling Program on developing decision making skill of Educational Sciences students at Counseling and Mental Health department at the World Islamic Science and Education University. The sample of the study which consisted of 40 male and female students was distributed to two groups; experiment and control . For collecting data, a group counselling program (10 sessions; two sessions for the experimental group every week was used. Results showed statistical significant differences between the experimental and control groups in the lost scale in decision making skills scale in favor of the experimental group.

Keywords: Group counselling, Program, Decision making, Mental health

INTRODUCTION

Decision making process has a great significance in many fields especially the field of psychological and counselling science. This process affects the students' educational and psychological situation , particularly the post graduates students. The postgraduate students are a very important educational, psychological and social sector as they are distinguished scientifically. Therefore, they should be rehabilitated and trained to make decisions in different social and scientific sectors. In fact, such training will develop the students' personalities and prepare them well to have an effective role in the sustainable development, in addition to deepen the values of group and voluntary work in the different

areas in the society. Moreover, the student will acquire variety of personal and social skills that enable them to deal with life affairs and its stresses and their leadership will be enhanced. Countries and societies have paid great attention to the postgraduate students and developing their personalities; psychologically, socially and mentally. The postgraduate students are considered the greatest capital to any country that seeks for growth and excellence. So the process of training and preparing the students cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally aims to enable them to perform their roles. The students need skills of decision making that help them to take responsibility and be independent. Also, these skills enable the students to get benefit of the past experience so they can avoid their mistakes. Moreover, decision making is considered as one of life' requirement especially in the youth stage as the individual face difficulties and situations the required decisions making. Some people complain that they were unable to make decisions while others can make easily. Decision making process is a human skill that has direct and effective impact on the individual's success at life .The individual's life consists of a series of decisions that extends from easy and simple decisions to more difficult and complicated ones. These decisions affect the individual's life quality; a decision may lead to the appropriate adaptation which causes the feeling of happiness or it may lead to suffering and feeling miserable. Therefore, decision making in the appropriate time is one of the difficult things facing people in their practical and family life. Such difficulty could be attributed to lack of all information concerning the decision that should be taken, or fear of bad estimation to some issues which make the process of decision making more complicated. Making decision process is a mental and cognitive process that includes a set of cognitive skills. It is possible to train the students on these skills. Indeed , the training process affects the individuals" life ; professionally , personally and socially .accordingly, this study aimed to raise the university's skills of the social communication and decision making through preparing a training program for developing social communication and decision making skills and to investigate its effect on developing these skills [1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Problem of the study

The study's ideas stems from the researcher's notice of the university students' low degree of making decision skill which was obvious in their hesitation in making decisions. so the research prepared a counselling program of decision making kills based on counselling sessions taught the student the process of making decisions.

Significance of the study

The universities in general seek to set plan and guided programs towards the students so as to prepare them for life to be effective members in the society by developing, building and leading it through acquiring many skills as making decisions skills . it is known that decision making is an important skill helps the young to be social leaders in the future

The study soaks to answer the following major question and its sub questions

- What is the effectiveness of a Group Counseling Program on developing decision making skill of Educational Sciences students at Counseling and Mental Health department at the World Islamic Science and Education University.
- Are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the performance of the experimental and control groups in the decision making skill scale attributed to the counselling program?
- Are there any statistical differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the performance of the experimental and control groups in the decision making skill scale attributed to the gender variable?

Terms of the study

- **Counselling program:** It is a set of planned technical procedures and methods include preparation, organization, supervision, evaluation and following up. This program is limited to a set of specified procedures, special tools within specific time for achieving a purpose (Al-Daheri, 2011).
- **Decision making skill:** It is a clear and planned process to choose alternative to achieve a specific goal (Al-Daheri, 2011). In this study, it means the degree which the students get in the making decision scale used in the study.
- Students of Education Science College –department of counselling and psychological health: they are students in their last years in this major (counselling and psychological health) [2].

Theoretical background and previous studies

Theoretical background

Concept of decision making: Scientists of administration and psychology agreed that decision making means that there is a set of alternatives that require comparison between them and choose the best one. So this comparison process is the core of the decision making process and without it no decision is taken. The concept "Decision" is a Latin word means separating or cutting. In other words, it means preferring one thing more than another. Decision making is a type of behavior that ends the thinking process and consideration of other alternatives. Decision making process is a dynamic process includes multi interactions in its different levels starting from level of design and ending with decision making and its implementation. In all the levels of decision making process, there is a careful and accurate choice to one of the available alternatives. Making decision skill is a chain of behaviors, responses and procedures done by the individual that lead to choose the best alternative. Some

studies and research state that making decision process in a systematic process consisted of sequenced levels as planning, search, choice , implementation and following up [3].

Factors affecting decision making process

- Factors concerning information: they include lack of information that is resulted from lack of knowledge of the location of the information, process of evaluating it, the existence of inappropriate information or inaccurate ones. Accordingly, the decision makers will be confused.
- Personal factors: they include competitive motives that lead to decision retraction or postponement, Low self-esteem and self-efficacy, multiple talents, capabilities and interests, conflict or opposition with others and conflict of values, interests, and abilities.
- Factors related to the shortage of knowledge and experience in making decision:

Factors related to lack of experience and knowledge in decision making as lack of decision making skills with limited experience in this field , in addition to low self-esteem in the individual's capabilities in taking decisions or his fear of the decision's process in general(Al-Daheri,2008).

Stages of making decision process

- **Identify the decision:** Analyzing, understanding and identifying the problem facilitates making the appropriate decision that leads to good results.
- **Look for alternatives:** The decision maker investigates and look for different alternatives (solutions) to solve a specific problem.
- **Evaluate the alternatives :** It is necessary to evaluate objectively the alternatives:

Choosing the appropriate alternative after identifying the alternatives for problem solution in light of facts and available information , these alternatives are arranged according to their advantages, disadvantages, costs and results. Then the process of choosing the appropriate alternative starts.

Decision implementation: some believe that decision maker's role ended by choosing the appropriate alternative for solving the problem. In short, the decision makers should study the problem and identify it accurately, in addition to look for alternative solutions that help in solving the problem [4].

Models of decision making

The models of decision making can be classified into two groups. Descriptive models: it is a model describes the way that the individual use to deal with a problem. These models agree that the individual's mission in dealing with a problem is to identify the decision's goal and the available alternatives and their arrangement in terms of achieving the goal. Prescriptive models: they are models that help in getting to the ideal decision.

Teedman and Ohara Model: this model indicates that decision making process consists of two stages; anticipation and implementation. This model confirms that anticipation stage is more important than implementation stage in decision making process. In the anticipation stage, there is a continuous thinking in identifying alternatives and their results followed by continuous evaluation for the alternatives in light of their advantages and disadvantages so as to come up with the appropriate one.

Vroom model: concepts of anticipation and power are used to describe decision making process which starts by the anticipation of the possibility of any correlation between a specific event and its result. Then the results are evaluated in terms of their efficiency in achieving more beneficial outcomes and one is selected [5].

Hilton Model: it consists of basic elements as introductions, belief and the individual's expectation of himself and the world which are affected by the individual's needs, attitudes and plans.

Gillette Model: the good decision needs sufficient amount of information about the situation and accepted result. The model classified the information under three systems.

Prediction: it includes the available alternatives and its related outcome in addition to the possibilities that connect the alternative with the outcomes.

Evaluation: it includes all relative details of the outcome and their hierarchal order according to degree of significance.

Decision Criterion: it includes all the rules that take place in the evaluation process.

- Identifying the contradiction that showed inappropriateness of the current situation with the new requirements so the individual starts to update the problem.
- Personal intervention where the reasons of contradiction are identified .
- Identifying the elements of decision making process as situation decision, information and the available alternatives.
- Comparing between the alternatives through evaluating all the available alternatives and its results and sequencing them hierarchal manner in light of the individual's efficient scales .
- Implementation: the alternative which was chosen, was activated.
- Evaluation : in this level the alternative is evaluated in light of the final goal.

It can be noticed that there is a difference in the mechanism of choosing the alternatives' Gillette and Froom arrange alternative according to their significance, then they choose the best , whereas , others as Hilton and Tedmann set a criterion for choosing the appropriate alternative.

Second : Prescriptive models are models that help in getting to the ideal decision

- Linear models: Franklin is the first one who suggested to use the linear models in decision making based on lack of sufficient information and he recommended writing the opinions which are with and against the decision. Also he put relative scales.
- Preparation and following up model: it includes two levels for information collection and feedback (Al-Daheri,2018).

Previous studies

The study of Kromblets(1982) aimed to identify the effect of a training program of rational decision on the quality of the professional decisions taken by the students. The sample of the study consisted of 147 male and female students in three colleges in California , distributed into two groups; experimental and control. The training program aimed at teaching the students the basics of decision making as the program includes practical activities to implement the steps of decision making . results showed that training improved the experimental group's quality of professional decision where there was no changed in the control group. Al-Samarat's study(2009) aimed to identify the impact of problem solving strategy in teaching National Education course in developing the decision-making skills of the tenth basic grade students in Jordan. The ample which consisted of 141 male and female students was distributed to two groups' experimental and control. Results revealed the superiority of the experimental group over the control group in decision skills development and the superiority of male over the females. Additionally , results showed lack of statistical differences between the achievement levels. Al-quraan's study(2011) aimed at preparing the training program on decision making skill and investigating its effectiveness on the first secondary students. Also , it aimed at identifying the impact of gender and major variables on developing decision making level of the students. The sample of the study consisted of 222 male and female students representing the secondary schools at Jerash Governorate in Jordan. Results indicated lack of statistical significant differences between the male and females in decision making level in both experimental and control groups. Also results revealed a significant effect to the counselling program to the favor of the scientific stream. To'ma conducted a study(2012) aimed to identify the children's ability in the primary stage in making decisions and taking responsibility in the fields related to their life in the school and at home .And the study aimed to identify the degree of difference between the male and females in decision making process. The sample of the study showed lack of statistical differences between males and females of sixth grade students in two different school in terms of social and economic level in Cairo. Results revealed lack of statistical significant differences between the males and female in the ability of decision making and taking responsibilities . while results also showed statistical significant differences in decision making and taking responsibilities according to the differences in the social and economic level in favor of students with high social and economic level. And in his study, Abdallah(2006) investigated the effect of training program in group counselling based on the

professional growth and decision making by the tenth grade students in Hebron. The study also aimed to measure the students' achievement and the parents' scientific level and their career in addition to their interaction with the program on the students' professional growth and decision making . The sample of the study consisted of 263 male and female students. Results showed statistical significant differences between the independent variables of the study [5].

Participants of the study

The population of the study consisted of all the senior students in the counselling and mental health department at WISE university in Jordan for the year 2018=2019.The sample of the study which consisted of 40 male and female students was selected purposefully and distributed into two groups; experimental(N 20) and control(N20).

Instruments of the study

- Friedman's scale of decision making skills reviewing the literature.
- The group counselling program (10 sessions; two sessions for the experimental group every week).

Variables of the study

- Independent variable : grouping counselling program
- Dependent variables : making decision skills
- Median variables : gender

Limitation of the study

- **Human limits:** the study is limited to the students of Education sciences at counselling and mental health department .
- **Spatial limits:** The study is limited to the Education Sciences college , department of counselling and mental health.
- Time limits: the academic year 2018-2019, second semester [4].

Statistical treatment

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the two groups of the study in the scale of decision making . moreover, VARIANCE was used to identify the significance statistical differences between the means of the two groups , gender and interaction between the program and gender in decision making skills .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First question: are there statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the post-performance of the experimental and control groups in the decision making skills scale attributed to the counselling program and interaction between them? To test this question, the means and the standard deviations for the two groups were calculated as it is shown in the following (Table 1).

Table 1: means and standard deviations of the experimental and control groups for the post performance of the decision making skills scale.

Group	Gender	M	Std
Experimental	Male 20	1.3,1333	77999
	female 20	###	79952
	Total	###	85668
Control	male 20	###	49713
	female 20	###	66854
	Total	###	58054

Results showed apparent differences between the means of the experimental and control groups in the decision making skills scale with total performance for the control group (85.56) and standard deviation (5.80). Also results showed the total performance of the males was (86.00) with standard deviation (4.97), whereas, the females total performance was (85.133) with standard deviation (6.68). According to the experimental group, results showed that the total performance of the male was (106.70) with standard deviation (8.56) and the males' total performance was (103.133) with standard deviation (7.79). Additionally, the females' total performance was (110.26) with standard deviation (8.566). To check the significance of this apparent differences between the means, Two-Way Analysis of variance was used as it is shown (Table 2).

Table. 2: results of Two – Way ANOVA of the impact of the group counselling program and the interaction between them according to the group variable.

Source of variance	Sum of seq.	Fd	M /seq	F value	Sig.
group	#####	1	7E+06	132.9	0
Group	#####	1	1E+05	2979	0.1
Group	239,68	1	2E+05	4851	0,032
Gender					
Error	2717,72	55	49413		
Total	#####	59			

The previous table showed statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the means of the experimental and control groups in decision making as F value was (132.889). table 2. Showed the mean of the post performance of the experimental group (1.6.70) was higher than the mean of the post performance of the control group(85.56) in decision making skills which indicates that the experimental group's decision making skills have increased in compared with the control group after the application of the counselling program. And this result is in agreement with Alsamarat's study(2011) which showed the efficiency of the counselling program for developing the scientific skills and the ability to make decisions. This result could be attributed to the real desire of the participants to acquire the decision making skills and the efficiency of the counselling program sessions as it includes behavioral , cognitive and counselling techniques which are easy to apply. Moreover, the program which includes assignments and discussions of authentic situations and cases allow the participant to exchange experiences directly. The previous table revealed lack of statistical significant differences between the groups attributed to the gender. And this result agreed with Al-Guraan's study(2011) which showed that there was no statistical significant differences between male sand females in decision making level. On the other hand , this result differed with AL-Samrat's study(2009) that revealed significant statistic differences between male and female in developing decision making skills. This result may attribute to the efficiency of the counselling groups regardless the gender. This showed an effect for the interaction between the group variable and counselling group and the gender in the postperformance of the decision making skills. The means of the males and female in the experimental group was higher than the mean of the male and female of the control group in decision making skills. It is clear that the females of the experimental group were the most beneficiaries of the counselling program in acquiring skills of decision making and this could be attributed to the idea that female are more interested in learning and acquiring decision making skills, Second question: Are there statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the mean of the experimental group's performance in the post scale and the following up in the decision making skills' scale? To answer the second question, T–test was used to compare between the experiment's group's performance in the post application of the decision making skills' scale as it is illustrated in (Table3).

Table 3: Results of T –test.

Scale	M	Std	T value	Fd	Sig.
Post	96,13	12,89	0.077	29	0.9

Results showed lack of statistical significant differences between the means of the experiment group in the post application with T value(0.077) and significance (0.938) which indicates the continuo effect of the counselling pram in the decision making skills. It can be concluded that the counselling program used in this study is efficient in improving the experiment group's decision making skills. And the experiment group gets benefit of the information and skills they achieved in the counselling program's sessions .

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Replicating the same study with different education levels with different needs.
- Ministry of Education and Ministry of higher Education use these programs so as to help the colleges to have the appropriate decisions in the future .
- Applying the counselling program in the basic and secondary levels.

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