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Perception of Quality of Life among Fifth Grade Preparatory School Students in Baghdad

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Abstract

The research aims to study the quality of life among preparatory school students in Baghdad, particularly in the context of current social circumstances, encompassing both male and female students. The study utilizes a quality-of-life scale developed by Noor Latif Abdul Zahra, comprising 54 items distributed across ten dimensions. These dimensions include physical health, mental skills, psychological well-being, resilience, optimism and satisfaction, self-independence and self-efficacy, job satisfaction, social support, social status, and moral values. The research problem revolved around the question: "Is there a sense of quality of life among fifth-grade preparatory school students (both males and females)?" The researchers established the scientific foundations of the scale and, after validating its reliability, distributed it to 40 preparatory school students (both males and females) in Baghdad. After statistically analyzing the data, the researchers found that preparatory school students (males and females) indeed perceive a high quality of life. Furthermore, female students outperformed their male counterparts in all dimensions and the overall quality of life score, and this achieves one of the sustainable development goals of the United Nations in Iraq which is (Quality Education). Based on their findings, the researchers recommend the utilization of the quality-of-life scale and suggest generalizing the results of the current study to other age groups of students. They also emphasize the need to consider the psychological issues faced by students and to develop adequate and effective strategies for addressing these issues within educational programs.

Keywords | Quality of Life, Preparatory School Students.

Introduction:

The presence of numerous crises and difficulties that Iraq has recently experienced, whether they are economic or health-related, has significantly increased the challenges of living and sustaining life. These circumstances have placed individuals under significant pressure, including professional, familial, and financial pressures, among others. These pressures have led to a change in lifestyle patterns and a lack of a sense of well-being and the meaning of life. Therefore, the term "quality of life" reflects the extent to which an individual feels happiness, sadness, and joy, stemming from their satisfaction with their social, psychological, familial, and health-

related conditions. Quality of life is represented and associated with various aspects, including feelings of happiness and satisfaction with one's health, psychological well-being, physical well-being, and social and familial relationships, whether in the workplace, at home, or elsewhere.

Quality of life is a comprehensive term that encompasses an individual's mental health, psychological harmony, as well as their optimism about the future and satisfaction with life. It also includes their ability to distance themselves from negative energy sources that may arise in their life through negative

individuals or adverse events. By improving their current situation and having confidence in a brighter future, individuals can transform these negative sources into positive ones. Consequently, this contributes to achieving a good quality of life, as they believe that life is beautiful and meant to be enjoyed.

Since students are human beings, they are inherently required to interact with the individuals around them. They interact with their family members, classmates, and others to fulfil various needs in their lives. This interaction must take place through various forms of communication, whether in family relationships, social interactions with others, or even verbal communication. Therefore, communication is closely linked to an individual's possession of social skills. Psychologists consider the ability to interact with society and its members as a capacity or competence that every individual should possess to lead their life correctly and to easily achieve their goals. Additionally, it enables them to overcome any problems or obstacles that may arise in their interactions with others, whether in their academic or personal life within the home and family context.

The research aims to assess the quality of life among preparatory school students in the Baghdad governorate and to determine the levels of various dimensions and the overall quality of life for these students (both males and females). The researchers hypothesize that there are no statistically significant differences in the dimensions and the overall quality of life between male and female preparatory school students.

The significance of this research lies in its continuous concern for the youth, particularly in this crucial stage of their lives. It underscores the importance of studying the reality of life for both male and female students, especially when they are in such a pivotal stage of their education. The research focuses on preparatory school students, totaling 40 male and female students. The

research was conducted during the period from 2/02/ 2023 to 19/04/2023. The study was carried out at the Central Preparatory School for Boys and the Central Preparatory School for Girls in Baghdad, emphasizing the importance of understanding the quality of life experienced by students during this critical phase of their development.

Method and Procedures:

The researchers used a descriptive approach, which, in agreement with (Alameen), is defined as one of the forms of organized scientific analysis and interpretation for describing, classifying, analyzing, and studying a phenomenon or problem (3). The study population and sample included fifth-grade preparatory school students in Baghdad, totaling 40 participants for the year 2023.

Means of Data Collection and the Utilized Devices and Tools:

Means of Data Collection:

- Arabic and foreign scientific references and sources.
- The World Wide Web (Internet).
- Observation.
- Testing and measurement.

Utilized Tools:

- Expert and specialist opinion forms.
- Questionnaires.
- KENKO brand handheld calculator.
- HP brand electronic calculator (laptop).
- Various office supplies.
- EXCEL software for data entry.
- SPSS software for statistical analysis calculations.

Field Research Procedures:

The "Quality of Life Scale" prepared by Noor Latif (15) consists of 54 items distributed over 10 domains. these domains are represented by a varying number of items: Physical health (4 items), mental skills (6 items), psychological health (6 items), resilience and self-confidence

(6 items), optimism and satisfaction with life (6 items), self-independence and self-efficacy (6 items), job satisfaction (5 items), social support (5 items), social status (5 items), and moral, religious, and social values (5 items). regarding the answer choices, the scale is based on a five-point Likert scale with options being: Always (5 points), often (4 points), sometimes (3 points), rarely (2 points), never (1 point). The maximum score on the scale is 270 points, and the minimum is 54 points, with the hypothetical average being 172 points.

Pilot Study:

The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the clarity of the instructions and items of the Quality-of-Life Scale in its preliminary form. This included assessing the appropriateness of the item formulation, its clarity to the respondents, identifying the most suitable method for conducting the main experiment, the clarity of answer instructions for the sample individuals, and the time required to respond to the items of the Quality-of-Life Scale. Therefore, the scale was applied to a sample of 20 students, not part of the main research sample, on Sunday and Monday, the 5th and 6th of February 2023. The pilot study revealed that the instructions and items of the scale were clear and understandable to the sample individuals, and the average time taken to respond to the scale was 15 minutes.

Application of the Quality-of-Life Scale on the Sample:

The Quality-of-Life Scale (Appendix 1) was administered to a sample of 40 students (both male and female) to conduct a statistical analysis of the Quality-of-Life Scale. This was carried out over the period from Sunday, 12th to Monday, 13th of February 2023. The scale was distributed in the form of a paper questionnaire to the students.

Psychometric Properties of the Quality-of-Life Scale:

1- Scale Validity: Validity, as defined by Intisar Kamal, "explains whether the scale measures what we intend to measure and nothing can be determined as the agreement between the statistical test scores and the property being measured" (5). Through the statistical analysis of the sample of 20 students and the calculation of the discriminant ability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was extracted to indicate the validity of the scale by examining the relationship between the dimension score and the total score of the scale. Pearson's correlation coefficient (8:38) was used for this purpose, and Table No. (1) illustrates these findings.

Table (1)
The Pearson Correlation Coefficient

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient													
Religious Values	Social Status	Support	Satisfaction	Independence	Optimism	Psychological Resilience	Psychological Health	Mental Skill	Physical Health	Quality of Life			
.649**	.641**	.552*	.658*	.575**	.633**	.637**	.802**	.768**	.465*	1	Pearson Correlation	Quality of Life	
.002	.002	.012	.002	.008	.003	.003	.000	.000	.039		Sig. (2-tailed)		
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	N		
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).													
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).													

Table (1) shows the significance of the correlation coefficients between the dimension score and the total score of the scale. After processing the results of the scale, it became evident from the table that the scale items achieved statistically significant values, as the error level for the correlation values is less than the significance level (0.05) for all items.

2- Scale Reliability: Reliability, as defined by (M. A. Rashid) (is considered a fundamental condition for good quality psychological tests. Therefore, reliability should be at a high level of accuracy and perfection in constructing scales) (4). The use of Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) to assess internal consistency provides us with an indication of the scale's ability to

discriminate effectively among most situations. As Ali Turki Nafel pointed out, this coefficient measures the precise and accurate degree of differentiation between respondents, making it possible to exclude items that do not effectively differentiate between respondents while retaining those that do (6). This method relies on the consistency of the item to the total Cronbach's alpha. To assess the reliability according to this method, considering its ability to discriminate between items, the total Cronbach's alpha was calculated and found to be (0.840), which is a high value. Therefore, the researchers must use all the items, as shown in Table (2).

Table (2)
Discriminative Ability: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Item number	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Item number	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
A1	.177	.837	E28	.452	.823
A2	.190	.830	F29	.292	.827
A3	-.458	.842	F30	.143	.830
A4	.447	.845	F31	.017	.833
B5	.589	.821	F32	.049	.835
B6	.483	.823	F33	.557	.821
B7	.772	.820	F34	.441	.824
B8	.663	.818	G35	.190	.829
B9	.044	.833	G36	.818	.814
B10	-.289	.839	G37	.099	.832
C11	.521	.821	G38	.002	.834
C12	.360	.826	G39	.300	.827
C13	.299	.827	H40	.213	.840
C14	.525	.822	H41	.015	.833
C15	.389	.825	H42	.462	.824
C16	.218	.829	H43	.261	.828
D17	.380	.825	H44	.067	.833
D18	.197	.838	I45	.423	.824
D19	.304	.827	I46	.698	.819
D20	.494	.822	I47	.415	.824
D21	.343	.826	I48	.402	.825
D22	.181	.829	I49	.284	.827
E23	.500	.822	K50	.519	.823

E24	.201	.829	K51	.269	.828
E25	.541	.821	K52	.487	.823
E26	.145	.830	K53	.457	.825
E27	.084	.835	K54	.553	.821

To find the reliability coefficient of the scales, the researchers also adopted another method, namely the split-half method. This method does not require a long time and aligns with the requirements of the test. To calculate reliability, the researchers used the data obtained from the pilot survey experiment. They utilized the Split-Half Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which involves dividing the scale items into two halves, upper and lower. The obtained coefficient ranged from 0.677 - 0.7730, indicating that this method provides equivalent scores for the two halves of the scale. Thus, the reliability coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as 0.7440, indicating a high level of consistency.

3- Objectivity: The experts agreed on the five alternative response choices (Always - Often - Sometimes - Rarely - Never), with corresponding values of (5-4-3-2-1), achieving a 100% consensus. Thus, the scale, along with its dimensions in its final form, comprises 54 items.

With the highest score on the scale being 270 points and the lowest score being 54 points, the hypothetical mean is 172 points. As

previously mentioned, the researchers have confirmed the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items, making the questionnaire suitable for application to the sample.

Main Experiment for Applying the Scale:

The main experiment was conducted by the researchers through the application of the finalized Quality of Life scale, consisting of (54) items, on a research sample comprising (40) male and female students, to achieve the research objectives.

Statistical Methods:

The researchers used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26, from which they extracted the following: Arithmetic mean, standard error, Pearson's correlation coefficient, independent samples t-test, paired Samples t-test, Cronbach's alpha, and Chi-Square coefficient.

Results:

After collecting the data, it was statistically processed to test the two research hypotheses and Table (3) illustrates this.

Table (3)

Sig. (2-tailed)	Degrees of Freedom	T	Test Value	One-Sample Statistics			
				Standard Deviation	Mean	Sex	Dimensions
.157	19	1.473	12	2.73188	12.9000	Male	Physical health
.000*	19	-5.968	12	2.47301	8.7000	Female	Physical health
.010*	19	2.854	18	4.23146	20.7000	Male	Mental skill
.249	19	1.189	18	3.38573	18.9000	Male	Mental health
.047*	19	2.127	18	3.15394	19.5000	Male	Psychological strength
.003*	19	3.396	18	4.47684	21.4000	Male	Optimism and satisfaction
.035*	19	2.272	18	3.74025	19.9000	Male	Self-reliance
.000*	19	9.125	18	2.59757	23.3000	Female	Mental skill

.000*	19	8.096	18	3.25900	23.9000	Female	Mental health
.001*	19	4.133	18	4.32861	22.0000	Female	Psychological strength
.000*	19	5.358	18	4.08978	22.9000	Female	Optimism and satisfaction
.000*	19	4.744	18	4.05359	22.3000	Female	Self-independence
.009*	19	2.892	15	2.78341	16.8000	Male	Academic satisfaction
.000*	19	6.766	15	1.91669	17.9000	Male	Social support
.128	19	1.590	15	4.50029	16.6000	Male	Social status
.001*	19	3.717	15	4.81227	19.0000	Male	Religious and moral values
.000*	19	6.525	15	3.01575	19.4000	Female	Academic satisfaction
.000*	19	8.850	15	1.97084	18.9000	Female	Social support
.000*	19	9.444	15	2.46235	20.2000	Female	Social status
.000*	19	21.527	15	1.68273	23.1000	Female	Religious and moral values
.229	19	1.244	162	17.97074	167.0000	Male	Quality of life
.000*	19	6.549	162	15.36400	184.5000	Female	Quality of life

As for the comparison between the quality of life for males and females, Table (4) shows the differences between males and females:

Table (4)
Statistical Indicators (Independent Samples t-test)

Sig	Degrees of Freedom	T	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sex	Dimensions
.000	38	5.097	2.73188	12.9000	Male	Physical health Mental skills
			2.47301	8.7000	Female	
.025	38	-2.342	4.23146	20.7000	Male	Psychological well-being Emotional resilience
			2.59757	23.3000	Female	
.000	38	-4.758	3.38573	18.9000	Male	Optimism and satisfaction Self-reliance
			3.25900	23.9000	Female	
.044	38	-2.088	3.15394	19.5000	Male	Academic satisfaction Social support
			4.32861	22.0000	Female	
.276	38	-1.106	4.47684	21.4000	Male	Social status Religious and moral values
			4.08978	22.9000	Female	
.059	38	-1.946	3.74025	19.9000	Male	Quality of life Physical health
			4.05359	22.3000	Female	

.007	38	-2.833	2.78341	16.8000	Male	Mental skills
			3.01575	19.4000	Female	Psychological well-being
.112	38	-1.627	1.91669	17.9000	Male	Emotional resilience
			1.97084	18.9000	Female	Optimism and satisfaction
.003	38	-3.138	4.50029	16.6000	Male	Self-reliance
			2.46235	20.2000	Female	Academic satisfaction
.001	38	-3.597	4.81227	19.0000	Male	Social support
			1.68273	23.1000	Female	Social status
.002	38	-3.310	17.97074	167.0000	Male	Religious and moral values
			15.36400	184.5000	Female	

Discussion:

The results in Table (3) reveal significant differences in all dimensions and the overall quality of life in favour of the higher group compared to the reference group, both for males and females. This aligns with the observations made by Noor Latif, as each dimension of quality of life, including physical health, represents an individual's ability to enjoy the biological processes of their entire body and maintain physical well-being, allowing students to fulfil their daily and academic tasks efficiently. Furthermore, mental skills encompass perception, awareness, and understanding of facts through abstract thinking or the acquisition of knowledge through experimentation and the interpretation of results. Psychological well-being, on the other hand, refers to the level of emotional and behavioral wellness in a student, indicating a positive emotional and behavioral state. Self-confidence and resilience represent an individual's belief in their own qualities, abilities, and judgments in evaluating situations. Optimism and life satisfaction refer to how individuals express their feelings and emotions and how they perceive their future directions and choices. Self-reliance and self-efficacy denote an individual's ability to make self-determined decisions or judgments independently without external interference. Academic satisfaction pertains to the responsibility of an individual to undertake specific tasks that require the application of a set

of professional, administrative, office, or field-related activities. Functional characteristics encompass an individual's capability to perform efficiently within a working environment. Social support is the perception that an individual feels cared for and valued by others, experiencing a deep sense of connection with them. Social status refers to the position or rank that a person holds within a group or society. Regarding moral, religious, and social values, as mentioned by Noor Latif, values are among the most important pillars upon which societies are built, and they relate to ethics and principles. They are general standards and guides for correct human behaviour (15:50). In this context, students feel psychological well-being, and the researchers agree with the assertion of Ikhlas and Sahira that psychological well-being plays an important role in creating an individual's quality of life (2). Consequently, this is reflected in their educational or academic level.

Additionally, quoting from Mazen and others, quality of life contributes to improving the scientific quality of the educational process, meaning that it is related to this knowledge (14). The results also showed that the physical health dimension for females was in favour of the lower mean than the hypothetical mean. The researchers attribute this result to the fact that females rarely engage in sports activities that enhance physical health. The researchers agree with what Huda and others have emphasized, many female students have physical skills that

help them perform, but they suffer from a lack of confidence in their abilities (16).

Thus, the first hypothesis of the research was not confirmed, namely that there are no significant differences in the dimensions and the overall total quality of life among preparatory-stage students (both males and females). This means we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there are significant differences in the dimensions and the overall total quality of life among preparatory-stage students (both males and females).

Additionally, the researchers found, as shown in Table (4), that there are significant differences in the dimensions and overall quality of life in favour of females. The researchers believe that this result is logical since males often face higher levels of pressure compared to females. Male students, by their nature, tend to plan for their future and lives more extensively as they will become responsible for their families and provide for them. This requires them to achieve several goals and face challenges at each stage, compared to females who may have lighter responsibilities and higher self-confidence. Furthermore, Jian Jamal and Sahira Razzaq mention that the social environment for females in our society is built on raising females to attain their status and reputation within the Iraqi community based on respect in dealing with their families and those around them (7). The researchers also add that females tend to embody the model of the Eastern woman, taking into consideration the customs and religious values, regardless of the roles they play in society. The researchers agree with Raghdaa's assertion that confidence is a product of broad general expectations that reflect self-satisfaction and an individual's perception of the environment and the feelings within it, which are based on the mental experiences possessed by the individual (11). The researchers also agree with Haneen's assertion that the preparatory stage or the beginning of the youth stage has its emotional and moral characteristics to confront life

pressures, which require self-regulation. Self-regulation is one of the main requirements for academic success in subjects, which, in turn, works on forming a reasonably integrated personality that aligns with societal standards without compromising one's independence (8). The satisfaction, which is considered a significant factor, is linked to individual success in various aspects of life, as Rawiya emphasized that it is an indicator of an individual's success in various aspects of life, whether familial or social (9). The researchers also concur with what Al-Mashaikhi conveyed, stating that an individual's psychological and social life in any society faces obstacles and problems that they may be compelled to deal with, and they may not accept dealing with (10). Similarly, as conveyed by Sundus, individuals may resort to seeking social support from those close to them to manage and confront obstacles in their unique way (12), which demonstrates their self-confidence. Let's not forget the role of educational curricula in making students the center of the educational process. Hind and Iqbal pointed out that making the student the focus of the educational process has contributed to the student's ability to rely on the scientific curriculum in thinking, by researching scientific knowledge using questions related to this knowledge and finding the optimal solution to the problems he faces (17). Consequently, this enhances their academic satisfaction.

Self-confidence is indeed a valuable ethical and practical trait that is a core element of an individual's personality. It is not only essential for a student's success in their academic and professional life but also plays a significant role in their overall life.

Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz Al-Mishani's perspective on the quality of life is that it represents the degree of personal satisfaction with life and an individual's perception of its quality, which has an impact on various aspects of life, including learning (1).

The researchers believe that the sense of quality of life is a subjective matter that varies from one person to another, based on the criteria individuals use to evaluate life and its requirements, which are influenced by factors such as the ability to think, make decisions, control, manage surrounding circumstances, physical health, mental health, as well as economic and social conditions, religious beliefs, and cultural and civilizational values through which individuals determine the important and most essential things that contribute to their happiness in life.

Quality of life, as confirmed by both Saba and Sahira, depends on thinking while retaining values and customs, and how to deal with problems that may be faced, and modifying behaviour to be more flexible in interacting with different situations (13). Therefore, it can be said that an individual feels the quality of life. With this, the second hypothesis of the research was not confirmed, which was a null hypothesis stating that there are no significant differences in the dimensions and the overall total quality of life among male and female preparatory students. We accept the alternative hypothesis that there are significant differences in the dimensions and the overall total quality of life between males and females, in favour of females.

Conclusions:

1. The validity of the Quality-of-Life Scale used by the researchers to measure the quality of life among preparatory school students in Baghdad has been established.
2. Preparatory school students, both males and females, have a sense of quality of life.
3. Female preparatory school students exhibit lower physical health compared to their male counterparts.
4. Female preparatory school students outperform male students in terms of quality of life.

Recommendations:

1. Utilizing the Quality-of-Life scale they employed to measure the quality of life for other educational stages.
2. Taking into consideration the professional challenges faced by students in schools, and establishing sufficient and effective means to address and improve them.

Author's declaration:

Conflicts of interest: None

We confirm that all tables and figures in this article are ours and written by the researchers themselves.

Ethical-Clearance: this manuscript approved by local ethical committee of physical education and sport sciences college for women on (July /2023)

Author's contributions:

All contributions of this study were done by the researchers (R.F. and S.R.) who get the main idea and work on writing and concluding also with number of experts, Sahira Razzaq (Physical Education and Sport Sciences College for women/ University of Baghdad) in Statistics, Manal Bayyat in revision, Inaam Ghalib in translating, Nasser Yasser in proofreading

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الإحساس بجودة الحياة لدى طلبة المرحلة الإعدادية (الصف الخامس) في بغداد

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1&2 جامعة بغداد/ كلية التربية البدنية و علوم الرياضة للبنات

3 كلية التربية / جامعة السلطان قابوس - عمان

هدف البحث الى دراسة جودة الحياة لدى طلبة المرحلة الإعدادية ببغداد في ظل الظروف الاجتماعية الراهنة (ذكور واناث) وللتعرف على مستوى ابعاد والمجموع العام لجودة الحياة لدى الطلبة ببغداد حيث تم تبني مقياس جودة الحياة لنور لطيف عبد الزهرة وكان يضم (54) فقرة موزعة على عشرة ابعاد وهي البعد الاول مجال الصحة البدنية والبعد الثاني مجال المهارات العقلية والبعد الثالث مجال الصحة النفسية والبعد الرابع مجال الصلابة النفسية والبعد الخامس مجال التفاؤل والرضا والبعد السادس مجال الاستقلال بالنفس والكفاءة الذاتية والبعد السابع مجال الرضا الوظيفي والبعد الثامن مجال المساندة الاجتماعية والبعد التاسع مجال المكانة الاجتماعية والبعد العاشر مجال القيم الخلقية، وتمحورت مشكلة البحث بالتساؤل حول السؤال الآتي، هل يوجد إحساس بجودة الحياة لطلاب الصف الخامس الإعدادي (ذكور واناث)؟ وقد أجرى الباحثون الاسس العلمية للمقياس وبعد اثبات صلاحية المقياس تم توزيعه على (40) طالب وطالبة من طلبة المرحلة الخامس الإعدادي في بغداد وبعد تحليل البيانات احصائيا توصل الباحثون إلى تمتع طلبة الإعدادية (ذكور-اناث) بالاحساس بجودة الحياة وتفق الطالبات الاناث على الطلبة الذكور بجميع الابعاد والمجموع العام لجودة الحياة، وهذا ما يحقق احد اهداف التنمية المستدامة للامم المتحدة في العراق (التعليم الجيد). واوصى الباحثون بالاستفادة من مقياس جودة الحياة، وتعميم نتائج الدراسة الحالية على باقي المراحل العمرية للطلبة والاخذ بنظر الاعتبار المشكلات النفسية التي تواجه الطلبة ووضع السبل الكفيلة والكافية لمعالجتها ضمن البرامج التعليمية

مستخلص البحث

جودة الحياة، طلبة المرحلة الإعدادية

الكلمات المفتاحية