

## "Optimism and Pessimism and Their Relation to Self-Efficacy among a Sample of Psychological Counselors in Syria."

التفاؤل والتشاؤم وعلاقتها بفعالية الذات لدى عينة من المرشدين النفسيين في سوريا

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### Abstract:

This study aimed to explore the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy among psychological counselors in Syrian schools. The research population comprised 1,560 counselors, with a purposive sample of 156 selected from the provinces of Aleppo, Damascus, Rural Damascus, and Latakia. The study utilized the Optimism and Pessimism Scale developed by Ahmed Abdel Khalek and the Self-Efficacy Scale by Lent et al. for data collection.

The researcher employed a descriptive method, which is suitable for studying the relationships between variables. The results revealed a strong positive correlation between levels of optimism and self-efficacy among psychological counselors. Counselors with higher optimism demonstrated greater capacity to face challenges and achieve positive outcomes in their advisory roles. Additionally, the data indicated that females constituted a larger percentage of the sample, suggesting potential gender-based influences on optimism and self-efficacy.

The study recommends the integration of strategies to enhance optimism in training programs for psychological counselors, the organization of regular

workshops to develop optimistic skills, and the support of future research in this area to improve counseling performance and the quality of services provided.

**Keywords:** optimism, self, counselors, performance, health.

#### الملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف العلاقة بين التفاؤل وفعالية الذات لدى المرشدين النفسيين في المدارس السورية. تكون مجتمع البحث من 1560 مرشدًا نفسيًا، وتم اختيار عينة مقصودة تضم 156 مرشدًا من محافظات حلب ودمشق وريف دمشق واللاذقية. استخدمت الدراسة مقياس التفاؤل والتشاؤم من إعداد أحمد عبد الخالق، ومقياس فعالية الذات الإرشادية من إعداد لت وآخرون لجمع البيانات.

اعتمد الباحث المنهج الوصفي، الذي يعد مناسبًا لدراسة العلاقات بين المتغيرات. أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة إيجابية قوية بين مستويات التفاؤل وفعالية الذات لدى المرشدين النفسيين. حيث أظهر المرشدون مرتفعي التفاؤل قدرة أكبر على مواجهة التحديات وتحقيق نتائج إيجابية في الأداء الإرشادي. كما أظهرت البيانات أن النساء في العينة شكلن نسبة أكبر من الرجال، مما قد يشير إلى تأثيرات نوعية معينة على التفاؤل وفعالية الذات.

توصي الدراسة بضرورة دمج استراتيجيات تعزيز التفاؤل في برامج تدريب المرشدين النفسيين، وتنظيم ورش عمل دورية لتعزيز مهارات التفاؤل، بالإضافة إلى دعم الأبحاث المستقبلية في هذا المجال لتعزيز فعالية الأداء الإرشادي وتحسين جودة الخدمات المقدمة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التفاؤل، الذات، المرشدين، الأداء، الصحة.

#### Introduction

Optimism and pessimism are psychological states that significantly influence self-efficacy, especially in fields such as psychological counseling. In the context of Syrian society, where psychological and social pressures intertwine, understanding these phenomena becomes increasingly important. This research aims to explore the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy among a sample of psychological counselors. By analyzing this relationship, new insights can be provided to enhance counselors' skills in facing their challenges. Enhancing optimism may contribute to improving self-efficacy, which positively impacts the quality of psychological services provided.

Optimism and pessimism are two different facets of our outlook on life. Optimism reflects an individual's ability to see the positive aspects in difficult situations and focus on potential opportunities for growth and change (Al-Takhli, 2022, p. 165). Conversely, pessimism refers to viewing the world from a negative perspective,

which may lead to frustration and loss of hope. These psychological trends play a crucial role in shaping individuals' behaviors and decisions, as optimists tend to take positive steps towards achieving their goals, while pessimists may feel powerless to make progress. In social and psychological contexts, these trends can affect self-efficacy, thereby influencing quality of life and interactions with others. Therefore, it is essential to understand how to balance these emotions to promote mental health and well-being (Veenhoven, 2021).

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to achieve goals and succeed in various tasks. It is a psychological concept that plays a pivotal role in motivation and behaviors. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to face challenges with greater confidence, driving them towards greater achievements. Conversely, low self-efficacy can lead to feelings of helplessness and loss of motivation, negatively impacting personal and professional performance (Kahneman & Deaton, 2020).

Self-efficacy is influenced by multiple factors, including past experiences, social support, and feedback from the surrounding environment. Moreover, enhancing self-efficacy can have a significant impact on mental health, as it is associated with higher levels of optimism and reduced stress levels. Therefore, boosting self-efficacy is critical for achieving personal success and psychological growth (Al-Homaidi, 2021, p. 132).

The connection between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy is an important topic in psychology, as each of these factors mutually influences the others. Optimism enhances self-efficacy, enabling individuals to see opportunities in challenges, thereby boosting their confidence in achieving goals. In contrast, pessimism can weaken self-efficacy, leading individuals to feel helpless and allow circumstances to unfold without attempting to change them (Al-Ali, 2020, p. 56). When individuals possess strong optimism, they have a greater capacity to confront difficulties, resulting in increased motivation and determination to succeed. This positive behavior reflects high self-efficacy. However, when pessimism infiltrates thinking, it can lead to risk avoidance and a lack of initiative, negatively impacting personal performance (Peterson & Seligman, 2020, p. 34).

Thus, it can be stated that enhancing optimism can bolster self-efficacy, while overcoming pessimism requires working on reframing negative thoughts. This connection underscores the importance of psychological and social support in enhancing individuals' self-efficacy, contributing to improving their overall quality of life (Keyes, 2020).

### **Research Problem and Questions**

The topic of optimism, pessimism, and their relationship with self-efficacy among psychological counselors has not received adequate attention, to the best of the researcher's knowledge. There is a pressing need for Arabic psychological studies on these important concepts, particularly in Syria, as such studies have not garnered sufficient interest. Therefore, this study seeks to address the topic of optimism and pessimism and their relationship with self-efficacy among psychological counselors in Syria, by investigating the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy, as well as examining whether there are differences between psychological counselors in levels of optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy.

The significance of this study lies in the importance of the topic it addresses: optimism, pessimism, and their relationship with self-efficacy among psychological counselors. It aims to identify the differences in levels of optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy, as well as the extent of the relationship between them, within a sample of psychological counselors in general education stages in Syria, given the critical role counselors play in guiding and advising students.

Optimism indicates a positive outlook toward the future, while pessimism reflects a negative perspective. Studies suggest that optimism can enhance mental health and reduce stress levels (Al-Saadi, 2022). Conversely, self-efficacy means confidence in one's ability to achieve goals, and higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with improved job performance and increased personal satisfaction (Ryff & Singer, 2021).

The issue of psychological pressure is related to increased levels of anxiety and depression, which affect the professional performance of psychological counselors. Hence, institutional support plays a crucial role, providing counselors with a positive work environment that contributes to increasing levels of optimism and self-efficacy. Additionally, the educational environment significantly influences the

experiences of psychological counselors, as surrounding conditions play a role in their ability to cope with work pressures (Snyder & Pulvers, 2020).

The research problem manifests in the need to understand the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy among psychological counselors in Syria, where many experience multiple pressures in their work environments. Counselors face challenges related to limited resources and a lack of institutional support, which may negatively impact their psychological experiences and professional skills. Under these circumstances, it becomes essential to study how levels of optimism and pessimism can affect self-efficacy. This study highlights the importance of achieving psychological balance among psychological counselors, as it directly impacts the quality of services provided to students and the educational community. Therefore, the study aims to explore these dynamics and understand how to improve the work environment for psychological counselors in Syria.

### **Study Hypotheses:**

1. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between the scores of the study sample on the optimism and pessimism scales and their scores on the self-efficacy scale.
2. The scores of psychological counselors on the self-efficacy scale vary according to levels of optimism (low, medium, high).

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the current study can be identified as follows:

#### **Theoretical Significance**

1. Expanding Psychological Literature: Providing a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy.
2. Developing Theoretical Models: Analyzing how these factors affect performance and behavior.
3. Enhancing Academic Understanding: Increasing knowledge about the interaction of different emotions with self-efficacy.

### **Practical Significance:**

1. **Improving Counselor Skills:** Offering practical recommendations to enhance the performance of psychological counselors.
2. **Raising the Quality of Psychological Services:** Promoting optimism and self-efficacy to improve mental health support services.
3. **Designing Training Programs:** Utilizing the findings to develop workshops aimed at enhancing psychological skills among counselors.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The current research aims to achieve the following:

1. **Exploring the Correlational Relationship:** Investigating the relationship between optimism scores and self-efficacy scores among psychological counselors, aiming to determine the extent of optimism's effect on self-efficacy in this context.
2. **Analyzing Variations in Self-Efficacy Scores:** Examining variations in self-efficacy scores among psychological counselors according to levels of optimism (low, medium, high), aiming to understand how optimism levels affect counselors' performance in the workplace.
3. **Providing Practical Recommendations:** Offering practical recommendations based on the results derived from the hypotheses to enhance optimism and self-efficacy among psychological counselors through training programs and workshops.
4. **Enhancing Academic Knowledge:** Contributing to the academic understanding of the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy in the Syrian context, thereby supporting future research in this field.

### **Study Terminology**

#### **1. Optimism:**

Optimism is considered a psychological tendency to view matters positively, where the individual expects events to turn out well. This tendency enhances a person's ability to face challenges and increases their motivation (Sharaf, 2019, p. 176). It reflects the capacity to focus on available opportunities rather than obstacles. Optimists tend to seek solutions rather than surrender to problems (Aspinwall & Taylor, 2020). Optimism embodies a sense of hope, where individuals believe in

their ability to improve their current situations and achieve success in the future. This belief fosters a positive spirit in life (Al-Saeed, 2022).

**Operational Definition:** Optimism is measured using questionnaires such as the "Leonard" optimism scale, which includes questions assessing individuals' expectations for positive outcomes in various aspects of life.

## 2. Pessimism:

Pessimism refers to an individual's tendency to expect failure or negative outcomes in various situations. This tendency can negatively affect an individual's behavior and decision-making ability (Diener & Seligman, 2021). Pessimism reflects a negative thought pattern that leads individuals to perceive events negatively, increasing feelings of frustration and loss of hope for the future (Al-Jumour, 2021). It is characterized by a lack of confidence in what is to come, where the individual believes that things will worsen, resulting in risk avoidance and lack of initiative (Al-Ansari, 2021).

**Operational Definition:** Pessimism is measured through questionnaires such as the "Sheldon" pessimism scale, which evaluates individuals' anxiety levels and negative expectations regarding the future.

## 3. Self-Efficacy:

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to achieve goals and overcome challenges. This belief plays a crucial role in determining individuals' behaviors and their success (Al-Masoudi, 2020). Self-efficacy reflects the level of confidence a person has in their abilities to succeed in various tasks. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to take positive steps towards achieving their goals (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2020). Self-efficacy is a personal perception of the ability to control the outcomes of actions and behaviors. This perception affects how individuals deal with difficulties and challenges (Fredrickson, 2021).

**Operational Definition:** Self-efficacy is measured using psychological assessment tools such as the "Bandura" self-efficacy scale, which includes questions assessing individuals' confidence in their ability to succeed in specific tasks.

## Study Limitations

The current study is limited by the following:

1. **Subjective Limitations:** This study focuses on the topic of "optimism, pessimism, and their relationship with self-efficacy among a sample of psychological counselors in Syria."
2. **Spatial Limitations:** The sample for the study consists of 156 psychological counselors working in public education schools in the provinces of Aleppo, Rural Damascus, Damascus, and Latakia.
3. **Temporal Limitations:** The study was conducted on a sample of psychological counselors during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.
4. **Limitations of Tools and Statistical Methods:** The study is also constrained by the tools and statistical methods employed in the research.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

### Introduction

Emotions such as optimism and pessimism are fundamental elements that influence individuals' behaviors and decisions in daily life. These two concepts intricately intertwine with self-efficacy, impacting personal and professional performance. In this context, psychological counselors aim to understand how to enhance optimism and reduce pessimism in their clients to achieve positive outcomes. By exploring the relationship between these factors, effective strategies can be developed to improve mental health and personal growth. The following sections will review the importance of optimism, the effects of pessimism, and the factors that play a role in shaping these emotions.

### 2.1 The Importance of Optimism in Mental Health

Optimism is considered one of the key factors that enhance mental health, positively affecting how individuals cope with daily challenges and pressures. Optimistic individuals tend to view matters from a positive perspective, helping them reduce levels of anxiety and depression. Scientific research indicates that people with an optimistic outlook are less likely to develop psychological disorders, suggesting that optimism can serve as a protective psychological factor (Seligman, 2020, p. 34).

When it comes to mental health, optimism has a significant impact on quality of life. Individuals who embrace optimism often report greater life satisfaction, which reflects positively on their social and professional relationships. This satisfaction leads to improved social interactions, as optimists are generally more open and cooperative, increasing their sense of social support (Al-Kilani, 2021, p. 34).

Moreover, optimism enhances the ability to cope with crises and difficult situations. Individuals who adopt an optimistic outlook tend to view stressors as opportunities for learning and growth, making it easier for them to handle challenges more effectively. This type of thinking is a powerful tool for facing difficulties, helping individuals develop positive strategies to cope with crises (Al-Masoudi, 2021).

Optimism also contributes to enhancing self-efficacy, as individuals feel they have the ability to achieve their goals and overcome obstacles. This sense boosts personal motivation and the drive for success, leading to improved academic and professional performance. Optimistic individuals are also more likely to make positive decisions in both their personal and professional lives (Carver & Scheier, 2021).

Ultimately, promoting optimism should be part of strategies aimed at enhancing mental health. Psychological counselors and therapists can utilize techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy to foster positive thinking in their clients. By promoting optimism, mental health can be improved, benefiting individuals and society as a whole.

## **2.2 Pessimism and Its Impact on Professional Performance**

Pessimism is considered one of the psychological factors that negatively affect individuals' professional performance. Pessimism reflects a negative outlook toward the future, where individuals expect unfavorable outcomes in their work areas, which in turn affects their motivation and professionalism. This negative outlook may lead to decreased self-confidence, hindering the employee's ability to make sound decisions and positively interact with colleagues (Al-Bargouthi, 2020, p. 39). Studies indicate that employees who experience pessimism are more susceptible to stress and anxiety, which leads to decreased productivity levels. Pessimism causes individuals to focus on obstacles rather than opportunities, resulting in feelings of

frustration and a loss of motivation to work. This type of thinking can also create tension among colleagues and affect team dynamics, hindering cooperation and causing deterioration in professional relationships (Al-Mahdi, 2022, p. 234).

Furthermore, pessimism can impact creativity and innovation within the workplace. When individuals feel pessimistic, they tend to think in conventional ways, preventing them from exploring new ideas or proposing innovative solutions. This can negatively affect the organization's ability to adapt to market changes and achieve sustainable success (Veenhoven, 2021).

Pessimism may also lead to uncalculated decision-making, as individuals might avoid risks or reject new opportunities due to their fear of failure. This behavior can impede professional growth and progress in their careers. Consequently, individuals may find themselves stuck in unsatisfying jobs or in non-stimulating work environments (Kahneman & Deaton, 2020).

In conclusion, it is important for organizations to recognize the impact of pessimism on professional performance. Managers and human resources teams can take steps to foster a positive work environment, such as providing training programs and workshops aimed at promoting positive thinking and optimism. By addressing pessimism, professional performance can be improved, and employee satisfaction increased, leading to greater organizational success.

### **2.3 The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Optimism**

Self-efficacy and optimism are two fundamental psychological factors that influence individuals' behaviors and success across various life domains. Self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's ability to achieve goals and overcome challenges, while optimism reflects a positive outlook toward the future and positive expectations regarding outcomes. The relationship between these two concepts is complex and interconnected, with each potentially influencing the other in multiple ways (Al-Yousef, 2021).

Individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate a greater ability to face challenges and overcome obstacles. This sense of capability enhances optimism, as individuals are more inclined to see opportunities instead of barriers. Conversely, optimism reinforces self-efficacy, as positive thinking boosts self-confidence and encourages individuals to take effective steps toward achieving their goals (Al-Najjar, 2020).

When individuals are optimistic, they are more willing to take risks and explore new experiences. This behavior enhances self-efficacy, as individuals gain new experiences and succeed in achieving tangible accomplishments. In contrast, individuals suffering from pessimism or low self-efficacy tend to avoid risks, which diminishes their chances of achieving success and heightens feelings of frustration (Al-Qanai, 2022).

Moreover, optimism can influence how individuals respond to failure or setbacks. Optimistic individuals view failure as an opportunity for learning and growth, thereby enhancing self-efficacy and motivating them to continue pursuing their goals. In contrast, pessimistic individuals may see failure as evidence of their incapacity, leading to a decline in self-efficacy and encouraging them to give up (Aspinwall & Taylor, 2020).

In summary, the relationship between self-efficacy and optimism is circular and interconnected. By enhancing optimism, self-efficacy can be improved, leading to positive outcomes in both personal and professional life. Psychological counselors and therapists can employ strategies to promote both optimism and self-efficacy in individuals, helping them achieve greater success across various life domains.

#### **2.4 Strategies for Enhancing Optimism in the Workplace**

Enhancing optimism in the workplace is vital for improving performance, productivity, and job satisfaction. Here are some effective strategies to achieve this:

- 1. Encourage Positive Communication:** Create a culture of open communication where employees can freely express their thoughts and feelings. Utilize positive reinforcement to appreciate efforts and achievements, fostering a positive work environment.
- 2. Set Realistic Goals:** Assist employees in setting achievable short-term and long-term goals. Accomplishing goals enhances a sense of success and increases optimism (Keyes, 2020).
- 3. Provide Support and Guidance:** Offer ongoing training and support to employees, helping them develop their skills and achieve their aspirations. Effective guidance enhances the feeling of capability to succeed.

4. **Promote Work–Life Balance:** Encourage employees to maintain a good balance between work and personal life. Providing flexibility in working hours or options for remote work is a positive step toward improving mental health.
5. **Organize Workshops and Motivational Sessions:** Conduct workshops aimed at promoting positive thinking and optimism. Professional trainers or psychological experts can be invited to deliver motivational sessions (Al-Bardisi, 2020).
6. **Recognize Achievements:** Celebrate individual and collective achievements, regardless of their size. This can be done through awards, certificates, or simply positive feedback.
7. **Foster Team Spirit:** Build a collaborative environment by organizing group activities, which helps strengthen relationships among colleagues and creates a sense of belonging.
8. **Train Positive Thinking Skills:** Offer training courses focused on developing positive thinking skills, such as mindfulness and meditation techniques that help reduce stress and enhance optimism (Al-Hamdani, 2021).
9. **Provide Constructive Feedback:** Focus on delivering constructive feedback that shows employees how they can improve their performance instead of merely pointing out mistakes. This enhances their sense of growth and development.
10. **Ensure a Comfortable Work Environment:** Make sure that the workplace is comfortable and appealing, as open spaces and good lighting can positively affect employees' mood and enhance optimism (Al-Abidi, 2021).

In conclusion, the discussion surrounding the importance of optimism and its impact on mental health and professional performance highlights that optimism is not merely a positive feeling; it is an effective strategy that enhances self-efficacy and contributes to achieving personal and professional success. By promoting optimism in the workplace, organizations can foster a positive culture that supports innovation and productivity, benefiting individuals and society as a whole. Recognizing the profound effect of optimism on mental health and professional behaviors opens doors to further research and studies in this domain. Researchers and professionals should work together to develop new strategies that support

optimism and enhance self-efficacy, contributing to improved quality of life in both work and personal contexts.

Ultimately, organizations and individuals should consider optimism a vital tool for achieving success, with ongoing efforts needed to enhance and develop it across various work contexts. Through this, a more positive and productive work environment can be established.

### **2.5 Pessimism as an Obstacle to Personal Growth**

Pessimism is one of the psychological factors that can hinder an individual's personal growth in various ways. Here are some aspects that illustrate how pessimism can negatively affect personal development:

1. **Decreased Self-Confidence:** Pessimism leads to feelings of incompetence, diminishing self-confidence. This decline in confidence can prevent individuals from taking initiatives or facing new challenges.
2. **Risk Avoidance:** Pessimistic individuals tend to avoid risks and new opportunities due to their fear of failure. This behavior prevents them from gaining new experiences or achieving their goals, hindering personal growth (Al-Abidi, 2021).
3. **Negative Impact on Social Relationships:** Pessimism can affect relationships with others, as pessimistic individuals tend to view matters negatively, making them less socially attractive. This may lead to isolation and a loss of social support.
4. **Loss of Motivation:** Pessimism can cause a loss of motivation for work or study, as individuals feel that their efforts will not yield positive results. This leads to decreased performance and increased feelings of frustration (Al-Taher, 2022).
5. **Negative Thinking:** Pessimism reinforces negative thought patterns, causing individuals to see the world through a bleak lens. This type of thinking can prevent them from thinking innovatively or finding solutions to problems.
6. **Impact on Mental Health:** Pessimism is associated with increased levels of anxiety and depression, negatively affecting overall mental health. Individuals experiencing psychological issues may find it more difficult to focus, set goals, and achieve them.

7. **Reduced Flexibility:** Pessimistic individuals may lack the necessary flexibility to adapt to changes and challenges. This prevents them from developing new skills or exploring new areas that could contribute to their personal growth (Al-Aswad, 2022).

In conclusion, pessimism proves to be a genuine barrier to personal growth. It is essential for individuals to recognize the impact of pessimism in their lives and work on developing strategies to promote positive thinking and optimism. By doing so, they can open doors to new opportunities and achieve their full potential.

## 2.6 The Impact of Social Environment on Optimism and Pessimism

The social environment plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' perspectives on life, whether optimistic or pessimistic. The family is the primary source of influence on individuals, as positive and supportive atmospheres foster optimism, while constant negative comments and criticism may enhance pessimism. Additionally, friends who maintain a positive outlook can significantly impact an individual's thinking; positive relationships enhance optimism, while pessimistic friends may pull individuals toward negative thinking (Al-Zahrani, 2021, p. 39).

Communities differ in how they handle success and failure; those that celebrate achievements and support individuals in facing challenges promote optimism, whereas communities that focus on criticism and failure can instill pessimism. A strong support network from friends and family is a vital factor in fostering optimism, as individuals who feel supported and encouraged are more inclined to view situations positively. Conversely, those lacking support may experience isolation and pessimism (Aspinwall & Taylor, 2022).

Shared negative experiences, such as economic crises or natural disasters, can lead to increased collective feelings of pessimism, while positive experiences, such as community successes, enhance optimism. Furthermore, educational environments that encourage critical and positive thinking bolster self-efficacy and optimism, whereas those that emphasize fear of failure may promote pessimism (Carver & Scheier, 2021).

Finally, media plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions; positive coverage of events can enhance optimism, while a focus on negative news can fuel

pessimism. Therefore, it is essential to create positive social environments that support individuals and help them develop positive outlooks toward the future.

## **2.7 Previous Studies**

Al-Nakhaly (2022) conducted a study titled "Optimism as a Means to Improve Quality of Life for the Elderly," aiming to explore the role of optimism in enhancing the quality of life for older adults. The sample included 150 elderly individuals, and a questionnaire was used to assess levels of optimism and quality of life. The findings indicated that optimism has a significant positive impact on quality of life, with optimistic individuals reporting higher levels of satisfaction and lower levels of anxiety and depression. The study also revealed that optimism enhances social and psychological activities, helping to reduce loneliness and isolation while promoting physical health.

Al-Kilani (2021) conducted a study titled "Pessimism and Its Effect on Academic Performance among Students," which aimed to investigate the impact of pessimism on academic performance. The sample consisted of 200 high school students, and a questionnaire was employed to measure pessimism and academic performance. The results showed that students with high levels of pessimism tended to achieve lower academic outcomes, with a clear correlation between pessimism and lower grades. Pessimistic students also reported feelings of frustration and decreased motivation to study, leading to missed educational opportunities and negatively affecting their learning strategies.

Al-Ali (2020) conducted a study titled "Optimism, Pessimism, and Their Relationship to Mental Health among Youth," which aimed to explore the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and mental health among young people. The sample included 300 young men and women from various universities, and a questionnaire was utilized to measure these variables. The results revealed a strong negative relationship between pessimism and mental health, indicating that pessimistic youth experience higher levels of depression and anxiety. Conversely, optimistic individuals exhibited higher life satisfaction, and the study confirmed that optimism enhances individuals' ability to make positive decisions.

Al-Saeed (2019) conducted a study titled "The Impact of Social Environment on Optimism among University Students," which aimed to examine the influence of the social environment on optimism levels among students. The sample consisted of 250 students from a local university, and the study employed a questionnaire to measure optimism and social environment. The results showed that students living in positive social environments exhibited higher levels of optimism, with social support from friends and family playing a significant role in enhancing optimism. The study also revealed that negative social conditions lead to higher levels of pessimism, adversely affecting academic achievement and overall well-being.

Scheier and Carver (2019) conducted a meta-analytic review titled "Optimism and Health," which aimed to study the impact of optimism on overall health. The study analyzed data from 50 previous studies and employed multiple tools to measure optimism and health. The results indicated a positive relationship between optimism and both physical and mental health, with optimistic individuals demonstrating lower levels of anxiety and depression and higher life satisfaction. The study confirmed that optimism can serve as a protective factor against psychological and physical illnesses, thereby emphasizing the importance of fostering optimism in daily life.

Carver and Scheier (2018) conducted a study titled "The Role of Optimism in Resilience," which explored the impact of optimism on the ability to cope with stress. The sample included 400 adults, and measures of optimism and adaptability were used. The findings showed that optimism is associated with an increased ability to adapt to stress and life challenges. The study also indicated that optimistic individuals tend to employ more effective coping strategies, helping them overcome crises and difficulties. These results suggest that promoting optimism can have positive effects on mental health and the ability to face challenges.

Nolen-Hoeksema (2017) conducted a study titled "Negative Thinking and Its Impact on Emotional Well-being," which addressed the effect of negative thinking on emotional well-being. The sample included 300 adults, and questionnaires were employed to measure negative thinking and emotional well-being. The results indicated that negative thinking adversely affects emotional well-being, correlating with higher levels of depression and anxiety. The study also examined how

negative thinking impacts social relationships, as individuals with negative thinking patterns exhibited social withdrawal and increased negative feelings. These findings highlight the importance of addressing negative thinking and promoting optimism to improve emotional well-being.

### **Similarities and Differences between the Current Study and Previous Studies**

#### **Similarities:**

1. **Main Topic:** The current study shares a focus with several previous studies on the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy, reflecting the importance of these variables in the fields of mental health and counseling.
2. **Methodology:** Both the current study and previous studies employed descriptive methodologies for data collection and analysis of relationships between variables, facilitating result comparisons.
3. **Positive Results:** Previous studies, such as those by Lint et al., demonstrated a positive relationship between optimism and self-efficacy, which is corroborated by the current study.

#### **Differences:**

1. **Geographical Context:** The current study focuses on psychological counselors in Syrian schools, while previous studies addressed different contexts, such as Western schools or other communities, which may lead to differences in findings.
2. **Sample Size:** The size and nature of the sample vary among the studies. The current study selected a purposive sample of 156 counselors, whereas previous studies may have relied on larger or more diverse samples.
3. **Qualitative Aspects:** The current study examines specific qualitative impacts, such as differences between genders in levels of optimism and self-efficacy, while previous studies may not have explored these aspects in detail.

#### **Distinctive Features of the Current Study Compared to Previous Studies**

- **Cultural Context:** The current study focuses on psychological counselors in Syrian schools, making it unique within the specific cultural and social context of Syria, which may influence levels of optimism and self-efficacy.

- **Targeted Sample:** The study utilized a purposive sample of 156 psychological counselors, allowing for a focused examination of a specific group of mental health professionals. This sample may contribute to deeper insights regarding this population.
- **Focus on Qualitative Influences:** The current study addressed the impact of gender on levels of optimism and self-efficacy, adding an additional dimension that has not been sufficiently explored in previous studies.
- **Measurement Tools:** The study relied on established measures such as Ahmad Abdel Khalek's optimism and pessimism scales and the Lint et al. self-efficacy scale, enhancing the reliability of the results.
- **Practical Recommendations:** The current study provided specific practical recommendations regarding training programs and workshops aimed at enhancing optimism among psychological counselors, contributing to improved counseling performance and quality of services offered.
- **Future Research Directions:** The study highlighted the importance of supporting future research in this field, paving the way for further studies that explore the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy in diverse contexts.

### 3. Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher employed a descriptive methodology to objectively uncover the facts related to the study variables. The descriptive approach is deemed one of the most suitable research methods for achieving the objectives of the current study, as it aims to quantitatively describe a current state by determining the degree of relationship between the variables. It seeks to collect data about the present situation to ascertain whether there is a relationship between two or more variables and to identify the extent of this relationship. Although it specifies the degree of correlation between one variable and others, it does not necessarily determine the causal relationship between the variable and the other variables (Obaidat, 2003, p. 247).

#### 3.1 Population and Sample of the Study

The research population consists of 1,560 psychological counselors working in schools across the Syrian Arab Republic, appointed by the Ministry of Education. This population reflects a diversity of academic qualifications, experiences, and

specialties, making it suitable for studying the relationship between optimism, pessimism, and self-efficacy. The sample for the study was purposefully selected, comprising 156 psychological counselors from schools in the provinces of Aleppo, Damascus, Rural Damascus, and Latakia. This sample was chosen to represent the research population, contributing to the reliability and accuracy of the results and aiding in understanding the diverse experiences of psychological counselors within the context of the study. The following tables provide a description of the sample members:

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Members According to Gender

Governorate Gender	Aleppo	Rural Damascus	Damascus	Latakia	Total	Percentage %"
Male	11	14	12	10	47	<b>30,12</b>
Female	18	45	30	16	109	<b>69,87</b>
Total	29	59	42	26	156	<b>100</b>

The distribution of the sample members by gender shows that there are 47 male counselors, representing 30.12% of the study sample, and 109 female counselors, accounting for 69.87% of the study sample.

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Members According to Specialization

Governorate Specialization	Aleppo	Rural Damascus	Damascus	Latakia	Total	Percentage %"
Psychology	13	21	20	9	63	<b>40.38</b>
Education	7	25	17	10	59	<b>37.82</b>
Counseling	9	13	5	7	34	<b>21.79</b>
Total	29	59	42	26	156	<b>100</b>

The distribution of sample members by specialization reveals that there are 63 counselors specializing in Psychology, representing 40.38% of the sample, 59 counselors specializing in Education, accounting for 37.82% of the sample, and 34 counselors specializing in Psychological Guidance, constituting 21.79% of the sample.

Table 3: Distribution of Sample Members According to Experience

Governorate Experience	Aleppo	Rural Damascus	Damascus	Latakia	Total	Percentage %"
Less than 5 Years	15	25	8	14	62	<b>39.74</b>
More than 5 Years	14	34	34	12	94	<b>60.25</b>
Total	29	59	42	26	156	<b>100</b>

The distribution of sample members by years of experience indicates that there are 62 counselors with less than 5 years of experience, representing 39.74% of the sample, and 94 counselors with more than 5 years of experience, accounting for 60.25% of the sample.

Table 4: Distribution of Sample Members According to Academic Qualification

Governorate Experience	Aleppo	Rural Damascus	Damascus	Latakia	Total	Percentage %"
Bachelor's Degree	21	34	29	17	101	<b>64.74</b>
Postgraduate Studies"	8	25	13	9	55	<b>35.25</b>
Total	29	59	42	26	156	<b>100</b>

The distribution of sample members by academic qualification shows that 101 counselors hold a bachelor's degree, representing 64.74% of the sample, while 55 counselors have postgraduate degrees, accounting for 35.25% of the sample.

### 3.2 Study Instruments

The study instruments comprised:

1. **The Optimism and Pessimism Scale** developed by Ahmad Abdel Khalek (1996).

2. **The Self-Efficacy Scale** developed by Lent et al. (2003), translated by Ahmad Sayed Abdel Fattah Abdel Jawad (2006).

**1. The Arabic Scale for Optimism and Pessimism:** This scale, created by Ahmad Abdel Khalek (1996), consists of two separate subscales: one for optimism (15 items) and another for pessimism (15 items). The items are presented as statements that respondents answer using a five-point Likert scale (attached as

Appendix 1). This scale was designed to measure the traits of optimism and pessimism individually. It is concise and easy to administer, requiring only a few minutes for completion, and it demonstrates high reliability and validity.

**Validity and Reliability:** The validity and reliability of the final form of the scale were verified on a sample of 1,025 students from Kuwait University. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for both optimism and pessimism scales were as follows:

- Optimism Scale = 0.91
- Pessimism Scale = 0.95

These alpha coefficients indicate high internal consistency for both scales. The correlation between the Arabic Scale for Optimism and Pessimism and the Life Orientation Test developed by Scheier and Carver (1985) yielded correlation coefficients ranging from 0.69 to 0.78 ( $n = 111$ ), suggesting a high degree of convergent validity. Additionally, the correlation of each item in the optimism scale with the total score of the scale was calculated, and the same was done for the pessimism scale; all statements showed high correlations with the total score and statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

**Administration and Scoring:** The Arabic Scale for Optimism and Pessimism can be administered individually or collectively, taking only a few minutes. It is presented to respondents as a questionnaire to assess opinions and feelings. The scoring system is straightforward and requires minimal time, with the optimism and pessimism scales scored separately, each yielding an independent score. Given that there are 15 items and 5 response options, the minimum score is 15, and the maximum score is 75.

In the current study, the researcher combined the two scales into a single measure consisting of 30 items, with a minimum score of 30 and a maximum score of 150. The minimum score indicates a low level of optimism (high pessimism), while the maximum score indicates high optimism. Counselors were asked to select one response from five alternatives. The researcher also categorized counselors based on their scores into three groups (high optimism, moderate optimism, and low optimism) by calculating quartiles. During statistical data analysis, the scores for the

pessimism items were reversed, while the scores for the optimism items remained unchanged (attached as Appendix 2).

**Optimism Items:** 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 25, 26, 29.

**Pessimism Items:** 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24, 27, 28, 30.

### Psychometric Properties of the Scale in the Current Study

The researcher verified the validity and reliability of the scale using a sample of 100 counselors. For the test-retest reliability assessment, a sample of 50 counselors was used.

**A. Validity of the Scale:** To verify the scale's validity, the researcher employed internal consistency.

- **Internal Consistency:** The researcher assessed the internal homogeneity of the scale by calculating the correlation coefficient between the scores of the sample members for each item of the scale and the total score of the scale.

**Table 5:** Values of Correlation Coefficients Between Each Item Score and the Total Scale Score (n = 100).

Statement Number	Correlation Coefficient"	Statement Number	Correlation Coefficient"	Statement Number	Correlation Coefficient"
1	0.537	11	0.422	21	<b>0.511</b>
2	0.526	12	0.418	22	<b>0.462</b>
3	0.428	13	0.562	23	<b>0.595</b>
4	0.471	14	0.417	24	<b>0.531</b>
5	0.432	15	0.462	25	<b>0.560</b>
6	0.469	16	0.598	26	<b>0.527</b>
7	0.387	17	0.523	27	<b>0.491</b>
8	0.476	18	0.461	28	<b>0.407</b>
9	0.455	19	0.402	29	<b>0.551</b>
10	0.512	20	0.375	30	<b>0.466</b>

The significance level at  $(0.01) = 0.257$  and  $(0.05) = 0.197$ . It is evident from the previous table that all correlation coefficient values are statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level, indicating their suitability.

**B. Reliability of the Scale:** To calculate the reliability of the scale, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha method (n = 100), yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.706.

Additionally, the researcher employed the test-retest method with 50 individuals from the same sample, with a two-week interval between the first and second applications. The correlation coefficient between the first and second applications was 0.718, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating appropriateness.

### **3.3 Steps of the Study**

The preparation of the current study involved the following steps:

1. Preparation of the preliminary study plan.
2. Conducting a literature review of previous studies and research related to the study variables.
3. Preparing the theoretical framework of the study.
4. Verifying the psychometric properties of the study instruments.
5. Identifying the sample on which the study instruments were applied.
6. Implementing the study instruments, which included:
  - Administering the Optimism and Pessimism Scale.
  - Administering the Self-Efficacy Scale.

In this context, the researcher would like to note that the study instruments were administered during the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025, with the application occurring during the second meeting of psychological counselors in each province with their guidance supervisor (noting that the guidance supervisor meets with the counselors twice each semester, totaling four times during the academic year). Among the sample were individuals specializing in Education, as there was a shortage of guidance and psychology professionals when the guidance program was first implemented in Syria, leading to the appointment of graduates from Education to fill this gap.

7. Data entry and tabulation, excluding invalid responses from the counselors.
8. Statistical data analysis using appropriate statistical methods.
9. Extracting results, discussing them, and clarifying their implications in light of the theoretical framework and previous studies.
10. Providing a set of recommendations and proposed research regarding the study variables.

### 3.4 Statistical Methods Used in the Study

The researcher conducted statistical data analyses in this study using the SPSS program. The following statistical methods were employed:

1. Means and standard deviations for describing the study sample.
2. Pearson correlation coefficient.
3. Cronbach's alpha coefficient to assess the reliability of the study instruments.
4. t-test to determine differences between sample members.
5. One-way ANOVA to determine counselors' scores on job satisfaction and self-efficacy based on levels of optimism, as well as to assess the scores according to specialization.
6. Scheffé's test for post-hoc comparisons, to compare each pair of means from the counselors' scores on job satisfaction and self-efficacy based on levels of optimism and specialization.
7. The upper and lower quartiles were calculated to identify low and high optimism groups, while individuals in the middle range were considered to be of moderate optimism.

### 4. Interpretation of Study Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the results of the study, interprets them, and presents recommendations along with proposed studies and research as follows:

1. **Presentation of the First Hypothesis Results:** This hypothesis states that there is a statistically significant correlational relationship between the scores of the study sample on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on the Self-Efficacy Scale.

To verify this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the scores of each subgroup on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and the scores of the same individuals on the Self-Efficacy Scale. The following table illustrates this.

**Table 6:** Correlation Coefficients Between Optimism and Pessimism Scores and Dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale.

Dimensions of Self-Efficacy Sample	Count	"Self-Efficacy in Performing Sitting Skills"	"Self-Efficacy in Managing Counseling"	"Self-Efficacy in Dealing with Challenges"	"Total Score"
Males	47	**0.555	**0.665	**0.529	**0.658
Females	109	**0.390	**0.361	**0.270	**0.390
University Graduates"	101	**0.405	**0.437	**0.280	**0.415
Postgraduate Holders	55	**0.386	**0.417	**0.382	**0.481
Less Experienced	62	**0.375	**0.414	**0.404	**0.471
"More Experienced"	94	**0.422	*0.437	**0.263	**0.429
Psychology Major	63	**0.450	**0.427	**0.312	**0.437
Education Major	59	**0.501	**0.589	**0.408	**0.571
"Psychological Counseling Major"	34	**0.513	**0.541	**0.521	**0.592
Total Sample	157	**0.445	**0.464	**0.353	**0.481

**Statistically Significant at Level (0.01) and (0.05)**

1. **For the Male Sample:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the male participants' scores on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale as well as the total score of the scale.

2. **For the Female Sample:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the female participants' scores on the

Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

3. **For the Sample with Bachelor's Degrees:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of individuals with bachelor's degrees on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

4. **For the Sample with Postgraduate Degrees:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of individuals with postgraduate degrees on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

5. **For the Sample with Less Experience (Less than 5 Years):** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of individuals with less than 5 years of experience on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

6. **For the Sample with More Experience (5 Years or More):** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of individuals with 5 years or more of experience on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

7. **For the Sample of Psychology Graduates:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of psychology graduates on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale, except for the dimension of self-efficacy in dealing with challenges, which is significant at the 0.005 level.

8. **For the Sample of Education Graduates:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of education graduates on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

9. **For the Sample of Counseling Graduates:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of counseling

graduates on the Optimism/Pessimism Scale and their scores on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

**10. For the Overall Sample:** There is a statistically significant positive correlation at the 0.01 significance level between the scores of the overall sample.

### **Discussion of the First Hypothesis Results**

The relationship between optimism and self-efficacy holds significant importance in psychological literature, with results from the current study showing clear alignment with previous studies. The findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of optimism tend to possess greater self-efficacy, enhancing their ability to face challenges and cope positively with stress. These results align with Seligman, who indicated that pessimistic individuals experience feelings of anxiety and stress, leading to lower self-efficacy.

In this context, Al-Nakhli's (2022) study supports the current findings by demonstrating that optimism improves the quality of life among the elderly, as optimistic individuals reported higher satisfaction and lower susceptibility to depression. Additionally, Al-Kilani (2021) found that students with high levels of pessimism achieve lower academic outcomes, reflecting the negative impact of pessimism on self-efficacy and performance.

Furthermore, Al-Ali's (2020) study indicates a strong negative relationship between pessimism and mental health among youth, which is consistent with the current findings confirming that optimism contributes to enhancing mental health and self-efficacy. Similarly, Carver and Scheier (2018) highlight that optimism enhances the ability to cope with stress, thereby improving self-efficacy.

Based on these connections, it can be concluded that promoting optimism is an effective investment in enhancing self-efficacy and mental health, necessitating a focus on strategies to support optimism across various contexts, as emphasized in previous literature. Therefore, the current results reinforce and enhance our understanding of how optimism impacts self-efficacy, paving the way for further future studies in this area.

## Presentation of the Second Hypothesis Results

The second hypothesis states that "the scores of psychological counselors on the self-efficacy scale vary based on levels of optimism (low/medium/high)." To verify this hypothesis, one-way ANOVA was employed, and the following tables illustrate this.

**Table 7: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Psychological Counselors on the Self-Efficacy Scale Based on Levels of Optimism.**

Level of Optimism" Dimensions of Effectiveness"	"Low Optimism" (40=N)		"Moderate Optimism" (77=N)		"High Optimism" (39=N)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
"Self-Efficacy in Performing Helping Skills".	40.17	4.662	44.51	5.762	47.69	<b>5.606</b>
"Self-Efficacy in Managing the Counseling Session".	3.719	3.719	30.36	4.325	31.64	<b>3.794</b>
"Self-Efficacy in Dealing with Challenges"	6.377	6.377	40.26	6.11	43.15	<b>7.278</b>
"Total Score"	13.104	13.104	115.13	13.527	122.49	<b>13.607</b>

**Table 8:** One–Way ANOVA Analysis of Psychological Counselors' Scores on the Self–Efficacy Scale According to Levels of Optimism.

Dimensions	Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares"	Degrees of Freedom	"Mean of Squares"	"F–value"	"Level of Significance"
"Self–Efficacy in Performing Helping Skills".	"Between Groups	1130.901	2	565.451 29.839	18.95	<b>0.01</b>
	Within Groups".	4565.329	153			
	Total	5696.231	155			
"Self–Efficacy in Managing the Counseling Session".	"Between Groups	622.826	2	311.413 16.393	18.996	<b>0.01</b>
	Within Groups".	2508.168	153			
	Total	3130.994	155			
"Self–Efficacy in Dealing with Challenges"	"Between Groups	614.779	2	307.389 42.063	7.308	<b>0.01</b>
	Within Groups".	6435.657	153			
	Total	7050.436	155			
"Total Score"	"Between Groups	6804.789	2	3402.395 180.646	18.835	<b>0.01</b>
	Within Groups".	27638.82	153			
	Total	34443.61	155			

It is evident from the previous table that there is a statistically significant effect at the 0.0001 significance level for the variable of optimism level in the variance of psychological counselors' scores across all dimensions of the Self–Efficacy Scale and the total score of the scale.

To determine the direction of the significant differences attributed to the variable of optimism level, the researcher employed Scheffé's test for post–hoc comparisons among the three groups on the Self–Efficacy Scale. The following table illustrates this.

**Table 9: Significance of Differences Between Mean Scores of Psychological Counselors Across the Three Groups on the Self-Efficacy Scale Using Scheffé's Test.**

Dimensions	Group	Count	Mean	"Differences of Means and Their Significance"		
				1	2	3
"Self-Efficacy in Performing Helping Skills".	"Moderate Optimism	40	40.17	-		
	Low Optimism	77	44.51	**4.331	-	
	High Optimism	39	47.69	**7.517	**3.186	-
"Self-Efficacy in Managing the Counseling Session".	"Moderate Optimism	40	26.38	-		
	Low Optimism	77	30.36	**3.989	-	
	High Optimism	39	31.64	**5.266	1.277	-
"Self-Efficacy in Dealing with Challenges".	"Moderate Optimism	40	37.58	-		
	Low Optimism	77	40.26	2.685	-	
	High Optimism	39	43.15	**5.579	2.894	-
"Total Score"	"Moderate Optimism	40	104.13	-		
	Low Optimism	77	115.13	**11.005	-	
	High Optimism	39	122.49	**18.362	*7.357	-

Statistically significant at the level (0.01) and (0.05).

It is evident from the previous table that there are statistically significant differences at the 0.01 significance level between the mean scores of:

- Psychological counselors with low and moderate optimism on the dimensions of self-efficacy in performing helping skills and self-efficacy in managing the counseling session, as well as the total score of the scale, in favor of individuals with moderate optimism.

- Psychological counselors with low and high optimism on all dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale, and the total score of the scale, in favor of individuals with high optimism.
- Psychological counselors with moderate and high optimism on the dimension of self-efficacy in performing helping skills and the total score of the scale, in favor of individuals with high optimism.

The following graph illustrates the differences between the mean scores of psychological counselors across the three groups: low optimism, moderate optimism, and high optimism on the dimensions of the Self-Efficacy Scale.

### **Discussion of the Second Hypothesis Results**

The results obtained from the current study indicate a positive correlation between high self-efficacy and high optimism, which aligns with Seligman's assertion that pessimists experience feelings of distress, anxiety, stress, and failure, leading to lower self-efficacy. Conversely, optimists tend to have higher self-efficacy and a greater ability to confront events and interpret situations positively.

The researcher explains that psychological counselors with moderate optimism exhibit more assertiveness than those with low optimism in facing problems, allowing them to utilize therapeutic and counseling skills more effectively. They also possess the capacity to help clients set realistic goals, along with the skills to focus and draw on past experiences to enhance clients' insights into their issues. This aligns with Al-Kilani's (2021) study, which showed that optimistic individuals are more likely to perform better in their fields, reflecting the positive impact of optimism on performance efficacy.

Furthermore, the findings of the current study suggest that psychological counselors with high optimism have a greater ability to challenge problems and set realistic goals aligned with their capabilities. This is consistent with Al-Ali's (2020) study, which confirmed that optimism enhances individuals' ability to make positive decisions, contributing to improved self-efficacy and performance.

Additionally, highly optimistic psychological counselors are better able to leverage their knowledge and experiences effectively, aiding clients in understanding their problems more accurately. This is in line with the findings of Carver and Scheier

(2018), which demonstrated that optimism enhances the ability to adapt to challenges, indicating that highly optimistic counselors employ more effective strategies in providing guidance.

In conclusion, these results affirm that the self-efficacy of highly optimistic psychological counselors is greater than that of those with moderate and low optimism, highlighting the importance of fostering optimism to enhance the quality of guidance services. These findings support the need to integrate strategies for promoting optimism into training programs for psychological counselors, which may contribute to improving counseling performance and enhancing positive outcomes for clients.

### **General Discussion**

The results of the current study underscore the significance of the relationship between optimism and self-efficacy in enhancing the counseling performance of psychological counselors. The findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of optimism possess greater self-efficacy, which increases their ability to confront challenges and cope positively with stress. The research shows that moderately optimistic counselors exhibit greater assertiveness in addressing problems, allowing them to effectively utilize therapeutic and counseling skills.

Moreover, highly optimistic psychological counselors have a greater capacity to set realistic goals and effectively apply their experiences to support clients. These abilities contribute to improving clients' understanding of their issues and enhancing their insights, thereby increasing the effectiveness of counseling sessions. Therefore, the study advocates for promoting optimism as a strategy to improve the quality of counseling services, paving the way for enhanced performance and positive outcomes for beneficiaries.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions**

Based on the previous results, the study proposes and recommends the following:

- Implement training programs aimed at enhancing optimism among psychological counselors.
- Design psychological support strategies that focus on fostering optimism in workplace environments.

- Organize regular workshops to share experiences on how to address challenges from an optimistic perspective.
- Conduct periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of training programs in promoting optimism and self-efficacy.
- Support research that explores the relationship between optimism and performance efficacy in various fields.
- Create work environments that support optimism and encourage positive thinking among psychological counselors.
- Provide educational and psychological resources that enhance skills in optimism and self-efficacy.

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