

Using group discussion in the group work method to developing university youth's awareness with the dangers of electronic blackmail

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the impact of using group discussion in the group work method on developing university youth' awareness of electronic blackmail dangers. The study employed a two-group experimental design with pre-and post-tests. The experimental and control groups of the study were comprised of (25) students from the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University. To ensure the validity of the study hypotheses, the program was practiced with the experimental group composed of (25) students who were included after confirming their need to develop their awareness of the electronic blackmail dangers based on the pre-measurement results. The findings of the study indicated the effectiveness of group discussions in the group work method in enhancing the awareness of university students about the dangers of electronic blackmail.

Keywords: Awareness, electronic blackmail, group discussion.

Introduction:

In recent decades the world has witnessed a major scientific and cognitive revolution in technology and information systems in all fields as it has become difficult to dispense with its services. However, it has also contributed to the emergence of a new form of misconduct called cybercrimes, computer crimes, or information crimes, including the crime of electronic blackmail committed by some users of this technology, characterized by its ease of commission. With a few clicks, the blackmailers can browse many accounts and websites and use threats that contain personal photos or recorded videos of the victim (Nixon, 2014, p143). Walker et al. (2011) conducted a study on students from the University of Pennsylvania, 11% of whom admitted encountering electronic blackmail. In addition, 29% of these victims were girls who experienced it 4 to 10 times during the university stage. Zalaquette and Chatters (2014) also supported that electronic blackmail is widespread among university students, and their study showed that 28% of the sample had a friend who was currently suffering from electronic blackmail, and that females were more vulnerable to blackmail than males. Besides, they indicated that the highest rates of this crime occurred via e-mail and from friends themselves.

Social media has become a means of committing crimes, such as slander, defamation, and blackmail, while others violate public morals by publishing immoral photos, videos, or posts (Ahmed, 2022, p. 289). In this regard, Tait and Jeske (2015) found that 54% of society members are involved in electronic blackmail, and 67% of society

members are victims of this form of assault and blackmail. They illustrated that most victims of electronic blackmail are young people, especially girls.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) issued a report that indicated an increase in the prevalence of cyber-extortion over the past five years; which was consequently reflected in the rise of the percentage of cyber-extortion victims; ranging between 65: 83% (Heravi *et al.*, 2018, p441). The challenges related to using the Internet have become linked to crime, and despite their positive effects on daily life, there are many repercussions that have affected a wide range of crimes that were previously nonexistent, such as Internet-based emotional crimes and intellectual theft spread on social media platforms. This type of violation is considered palatable to perpetrators due to the concealment of identity, the possibility of harm, the impossibility of tracking, and the difficulty of revealing the victim through social media sites (Brands & Doom, 2022, p. 127). because the spread of this crime can be because the blackmailer uses his special knowledge of cyberspace to cause harm, achieve some personal gains, or enjoy controlling the accounts of some people and companies through electronic vulnerabilities in their platforms by means of cyber-attacks, such as unauthorized intrusion into operating systems (Bossler and Berenblum, 2019, p. 495).

University students are the most frequent users of these websites due to their efficient computer and Internet skills, which enables them to design their own accounts with ease (Aliou, 2024, p. 5). The lack of sufficient knowledge of modern technologies, ignorance of their use, and the diversity of social media, including visual means, are some of the most important reasons that lead users to fall victim to electronic blackmail (Frisen *et al.*, 2013, p. 26).

The lack of awareness among social media users and Internet users has led to fear of myths related to experiencing cybercrime even if they have not been victims before (Wall, 2008, p861). Therefore, Michael (2009) confirmed the challenges facing young people, represented in the lack of awareness of how to deal with various societal issues. The study recommended paying attention to the youth category by developing their abilities and skills to qualify them to participate in various aspects of life.

Threats in cybercrimes are made through exclusion from situations and social networks, disguise and fake accounts on social media platforms to jeopardize the victim's reputation and character;

moreover, they are used as a means to manipulate suspicious points of view by deceptive tricks, tainted with emotional, moral, material, or sexual blackmail (Fakhrou *et al.*, 2022, p. 40). Therefore, cybercrime is one of the most dangerous growing criminal phenomena.

Electronic blackmail, hence, requires specialists in this field to find new successful ways to control these crimes because electronic crimes affect the security and safety of society. Thus, the development of plans to increase the sense of security within society is needed, and officials should move towards eliminating the causes behind the emergence of these types of felonies and involving young people in programs and projects that are beneficial to them and their society (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017, P51). The technological proficiency of electronic blackmailers allows them to reach victims without revealing their identities. Also, the ability of the blackmailers to control the victims within any country and blackmail them financially, psychologically, and physically always puts the victim under mental and emotional pressure and constant fear of the unknown perpetrator (Jackson & Jennifer, 2017, p9).

Willard (2005) asserted the relationship between electronic blackmail and a number of psychological and social problems among students, which resulted in the spread of a number of psychological disorders, such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and a deficiency in adaptive behaviors. The victim of cybercrime may feel excessive shame to the point of social isolation and suffer from emotional distress and feelings of violation due to loss of privacy and a feeling of being self-exposed (Sabapathi & Peter, 2023, p. 117). Wilson *et al.*, (2001) indicated that an individual's exposure to a traumatic experience makes him isolated from his surroundings and unable to handle personal situations, negatively affecting his lack of emotional and social support. That is, the traumatized person may behave in social situations in a way that reflects his low self-esteem, and there is a limitation in his ability to communicate and make social connections.

Social work is considered a humanitarian profession that deals with all sectors of society. We believe that the university youth category is one of the profession's concerns as it strives to focus on preparing the social worker with a degree of awareness to be able to deal with problems positively. The Social Work Education Council indicated that social work students need to be familiar with the new skills that enable them to manage various societal issues (Hassan,

2012, p. 5646). Rafai (2017) focused on the importance of social awareness of cybercrimes in Egypt and aimed to highlight the current reality of cybercrime, its methods, and its causes. It concluded that the sources of knowledge about cybercrime include the media, the Internet, and friends and the most important causes are unemployment, poverty, lack of morals, and corruption of employees. The study also revealed that the most common categories of perpetrators are hackers, technical technicians, and some brokers, respectively.

The group work method is of great importance in raising awareness and educating about the dangers of electronic blackmail and the necessity of joint efforts exerted by members of society. These efforts include holding awareness-raising events, workshops, and educational campaigns in schools, universities, and local communities to enhance perception and resistance against electronic blackmail to protect university youth and prompt their psychological and moral safety (Sameer, 2021, p. 67).

Group discussion is one of the indispensable techniques of group work method that each one needs in his work environment. During the discussion, the different aspects of the problem are identified and then analyzed. All members of the group participate in the discussion, trying to exchange as many facts and information as possible within a specific time. At the end of each discussion, each individual can acquire new ideas and achieve better cohesion within the group. Group discussions develop the capabilities of group members and provide them with the necessary experiences in various fields (Nasr, 2023, p. 104). Abdel-Ati (2005) indicated that the use of group discussions contributes to reaching collective decisions regarding the problems facing university youth. It is also a means of directing interaction among youth and modifying their attitudes towards society. Niveditha (2009) also confirmed the effectiveness of group discussion methods in increasing the social performance of group members and helping them exchange and generate more ideas about the problems facing the group.

Therefore, developing university youth's awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail has become necessary to develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of youth and enable them to confront the hazards of electronic blackmail. Based on the findings of previous research, the present study attempts to answer the following research question: Does the use of group discussion in the group work method lead to developing university youth' awareness of electronic blackmail dangers?

Study Objectives:

The current study aims to obtain the following objectives:

- 1- Determining the impact of using group discussion in group work to develop university youth' awareness of the electronic blackmail dangers. This purpose is achieved through the following sub-objectives:
 - a. Identifying the impact of using group discussion in group work methods to develop university youth' knowledge of the dangers of electronic blackmail.
 - b. Examining the impact of using group discussion in group work method to develop the emotional side of university students towards the dangers of electronic blackmail.
 - c. Investigating the impact of using group discussion in group work method to develop university youth' behaviors regarding the dangers of electronic blackmail.

Study hypotheses:

The primary hypotheses of the research are as follows:

- 1- There are no statistically significant differences between the averages of the pre-measurement scores of the control and experimental groups on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.
- 2- There are no statistically significant differences between the averages of the pre-and post-measurement scores of the control group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.
- 3- There are statistically significant differences between the averages of the pre-and post-measurement scores of the experimental group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.
- 4- There are statistically significant differences between the averages of the post-measurement scores of the control and experimental groups on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.

Study concepts

Group discussion: Group discussion is defined as a verbal interaction that takes place between a number of people with the aim of reaching a state of mutual understanding of a topic or a solution to a specific problem (Mankarios, 2004, p. 140).

Group discussion is a basic technique in the group work method because it is a cooperative dialogue in which group members participate on the basis of freedom and equality (Al-Jundi et al., 2007, p 264).

It is defined as a conversation that takes place between a group of individuals to discuss a specific topic that concerns them all, and it takes the form of friendly discussions away from formalities to clarify opinions and ideas (Atiya, 2005, p. 203).

Awareness: The Social Work Dictionary refers to awareness as the process of helping an individual or group become aware of and more sensitive to social conditions, causes, and ideas that have lesser interests and priorities than the individual or group (Al-Sukari, 2000, p. 116). Awareness is defined as the sum of the thoughts and information that circulate in a person's head and mind and that influences his or her decisions (Grant and McMillan, 2013, p. 247).

Operational definition of Awareness:

A process that aims to develop university youth' awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail through three components:

- The cognitive component: Young people are provided with information related to electronic blackmail to enable them to recognize its dangers and effects.
- The emotional component: It includes enhancing tendencies, trends, and values with the aim of creating positive trends related to combating the dangers of electronic blackmail and not doing it.
- The behavioral component: It is represented in helping young people acquire positive practices and behaviors and get rid of negative behaviors associated with blackmail.

Theoretical Guidelines of the Research (Cognitive theory):

Cognitive Theory is concerned with analyzing and interpreting human behavior from a mental and cognitive perspective, and it focuses on thinking more than unconscious motives. It views the individual as learning through thinking and perception of situations since perception is prior knowledge stored through the processes of concentration, recording, learning, and expectation (Segal, Steiner, 2010, p12).

Cognitive Theory is based on a set of assumptions that there is a relationship between thinking, emotion, and behavior. An individual's emotional reaction to a specific event depends on the individual's way of thinking, perceiving, interpreting, and imagining. This formation determines the cognitive formula with which the individual receives events (Muhammad, 2000, p. 111).

Cognitive Theory can be used in the current study as follows:

This theory addresses increasing the knowledge and information of university youth, and this is the core of the current study as it focuses on knowledge related to the risks of electronic blackmail. This theory is based on modifying the youth's misconceptions (i.e., intentional change) in order to avoid negative behaviors when dealing with various electronic communication platforms. This theory can help make some changes in the attitudes of university youth so that they become more able to think correctly, conduct a cognitive analysis of their ideas and their established values, and perceive the knowledge and information that have been acquired.

Professional Intervention Program:

- **Objectives of the Professional Intervention Program:** The general objective of the program is the same as the objective of the study, which is to develop university youth' awareness of electronic blackmail dangers in terms of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects.

- The program foundations are determined by identifying activities consistent with the interests, needs, and desires of group members, taking into account the suitability of the program content with the available resources and the objective of the current study. Therefore, the researchers tend to diversify the methods of group discussion used and direct them to achieve the objective.

- **Professional Intervention Program Activities:** The researchers carried out (27) activities with the experimental group, implementing a three-month professional intervention. These activities varied between lectures, seminars, meetings, role-playing, and workshops in order to foster the participants' awareness of the electronic blackmail hazards

- Group discussion methods used in the professional intervention program:

Brainstorming: Participants of the experimental group were encouraged to innovate and think of different ideas in a short time by presenting a problem to the members.- Discussion through small groups: The experimental group was divided into smaller groups; then, each small group reviewed the topic, agreed on specific ideas, and, in the end, presented the results of the group's discussion to the other groups. - General discussion: a leader was selected for each group who tackled the topic by presenting a small part of the

discussion topic in the form of a lecture. Then the subjects of the study are allowed to participate by expressing their opinions, and the leader stimulates all members to interact in the discussion. -Discussion using audio-visual means: The researchers show some videos or pictures to the participants, and the group leader asks them to express their opinions on the addressed topic. This method is characterized by attractiveness and excitement.

The tools in the professional intervention program include individual and group interviews, periodic meetings with members of the experimental group, periodic reports, and simple observation.

Skills used in the professional intervention program encompass forming and strengthening professional relationships, observing and directing interaction, dealing with defining tasks, persuasion, encouraging and directing, and time management.

Evaluation of the Professional Intervention Program: The researchers evaluated the program at the end of the meetings with the participants of the experimental group to ensure that its objective was achieved. This is implemented via observing the changes that occurred in the group members, comparing the results of both the pre-and post-measurements of the scale of awareness of the electronic blackmail risks, monitoring the ability of each member to think about one of the problems related to electronic blackmail, presented to them during the meetings to provide solutions, and verifying the changes that occurred in the group members during the evaluation meeting.

Methodology

This study, belongs to the quasi-experimental studies pattern, to obtain the primary objective of the current study, the experimental design was followed to measure the return on professional intervention in social work. This study is concerned with testing the effect of the relationship between two variables: The independent variable is the group discussion technique in the group work method, and the dependent variable is developing university youth's awareness of electronic blackmail dangers.

- Following the experimental method, the two-group design (one experimental and the other control) with pre-and post-tests is utilized.

Study tool:

The researchers used a scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail, which was constructed through the following steps:

The researchers identified the main dimensions of the scale and determined its variables. The total number of phrases on the scale reached (60) phrases distributed as follows: cognitive awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail (20) phrases, emotional awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail (20) phrases, behavioral awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail (20) phrases.

The validity of the scale was verified by relying on the validity of the arbitrators. The tool was presented to (5) arbitrators to express their opinion on the validity of the tool. Some phrases were modified, and others were corrected. Accordingly, the tool was formulated in its final form. The total number of phrases on the scale after validity was (47) phrases distributed as follows: (16) phrases for cognitive awareness, (15) phrases for emotional awareness, and (16) phrases for behavioral awareness. Correlation coefficients were also calculated between the total scores of each dimension of the scale and the total score. Concerning the stability of the scale, it was calculated using Test-Retest, where the scale was applied to a sample of (10) individuals and was reapplied again to the same individuals with a time interval of fifteen days. The scale was shown to have a high degree of stability and accuracy; thus, its results can be relied upon.

Table (1) Values of correlation coefficients between the total scores of the sub-dimensions of the scale and the total score (n=10)

Scale dimensions	Correlation coefficient	Significance
First dimension	**0.854	0.00
Second dimension	**0.817	0.00
Third dimension	**0.926	0.00

Table (2) Values of the results of the scale stability (n=10)

Scale dimensions	Pearson Correlation
First dimension	**0.914
Second dimension	**0.831
Third dimension	**0.845
The scale as a whole	**0.827

Sample

- The professional intervention program was applied to fourth-year students, regular department, Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University.
- The sample included (214) students who accepted to participate in the program.
- A purposive sampling method was followed according to the following criteria: They should be fourth-year students of the

regular department, Faculty of Social Work, totally willing to participate in the professional intervention program; they must obtain low scores on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail; and there should be homogeneity between the subjects of the control and experimental groups.

- After applying the eligibility criteria, the sample size became (50) students.
- The sample was randomly divided into two groups: The experimental included (25) individuals and the control (25) individuals.

Table (3) Homogeneity between the control and experimental groups according to the variables of age and number of hours of Internet use (n=50)

Variable		Control group (N=25)		Experimental group (N=25)		Chi-Square Tests
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Age	20 years old - 22 years old	8	32%	10	40%	6.000 (df=4)
	22 years old - 24 years old	13	52%	12	48%	
	24 years old and above	4	16%	3	12%	
Number of hours of internet use	Less than 2 hours	7	28%	5	20%	5.999 (df=4)
	From 2 hours to 4 hours	16	64%	14	56%	
	More than 4 hours	2	8%	6	24%	

- The results of the table indicate the distribution of the cases of the experimental and control groups based on the age variable, as the value of $\text{Chi}^2 = 6.00$ is not significant, which indicates that the two groups started close in terms of age, which indicates the homogeneity of the two groups concerning this variable.
- The extent of homogeneity of the control and experimental groups in the variable of the number of hours of Internet use was also evident, as the value of $\text{Chi}^2 = 5.999$ is not significant, which indicates that the two groups started close in this variable.

B- The spatial scope of the study was determined in the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University. The selection of this sample of university youth is due to the suitability of the place as it falls within the scope of the researchers' study, the ease of obtaining the required support for the program, whether in terms of the availability of the participants or their regularity during the implementation of the program.

C- The period of conducting the experiment for the study and applying the professional intervention program took three months, from 5/28/2024 to 8/29/2024.

Study Results:

Table (4) shows the significance of the differences between the control and experimental groups in the pre-test on the dimensions of the electronic blackmail risk awareness scale (n=50).

Group Variable	Pre-test Control group (N=25)		Pre-test Experimental group (N=25)		T- Test
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	
Cognitive awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	23.08	2.66	23.92	2.91	1.064
Emotional awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	22.16	3.15	22.72	2.52	0.692
Behavioral awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	22.12	3.33	20.60	2.91	1.716
The scale as a whole	67.36	6.08	67.24	6.19	0.069

Table (4) shows that there were no significant differences between the average scores of the pre-measurement of the control and experimental group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail as a whole, as the value of $t = 0.069$, which is not significant.

The results indicated that there were no differences between the two groups on the dimensions of the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail, clarified by the value of the (t) test.

The results, shown in the table, confirmed the validity of the first hypothesis: There were no statistically significant differences between the average scores of the pre-measurement of the members of the control and experimental groups on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.

Table (5) shows the significance of the differences between the pre-and post-measurements of the control group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail (n=25).

Group Variable	Pre-measurement Control group		Post- measurement Control group		T- Test
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	
Cognitive awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	23.92	2.91	22.72	2.33	1.638
Emotional awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	22.72	2.52	21.40	1.84	2.084
Behavioral awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	20.60	2.91	21.52	2.16	1.237
The scale as a whole	67.24	6.19	65.64	4.41	1.054

Table (5) shows that there were no significant differences between the average scores of the pre-and post-measurement of the control group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail; the value of $t = 1.054$ was not significant, evident in the absence of differences in the dimensions of the scale (i.e., cognitive awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail, emotional awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail, and behavioral awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail), which was confirmed by the value of the (t) test.

These results confirmed the validity of the second hypothesis of the study: There were no statistically significant differences between the average scores of the pre- and post-measurements of the control group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail.

Table (6) illustrates the significance of the differences between the pre- and post-measurements of the experimental group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail (n=25).

Group Variable	Pre-measurement Experimental group		Post-measurement Experimental group		T- Test
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	
Cognitive awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	23.08	2.66	37.04	3.33	**19.646
Emotional awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	22.16	3.15	34.72	3.57	**12.976
Behavioral awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	22.12	3.33	34.16	3.46	**13.124
The scale as a whole	67.36	6.08	105.92	6.75	**21.410

Table (6) indicates that there were significant differences between the average scores of the pre-and post-measurements of the experimental group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail as a whole in favor of the post-measurement; the value of $t = 21.410^{**}$, which is significant at the level of (0.01). In addition, Table (6) shows that there is a change in the cases of the experimental group regarding their average scores for the pre-and post-measurement on each dimension of the scale and on the scale as a whole.

These results validated the third hypothesis of the study: There were statistically significant differences between the average scores of the pre-and post-measurements of the experimental group cases on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail in favor of the post-measurement.

Table (7) shows the significance of the differences between the control and experimental groups in the post-test on the dimensions of the electronic blackmail risk awareness scale (n=50).

Group Variable	Post-measurement Control group(N=25)		Post-measurement Experimental group(N=25)		T- Test
	Mean	Std.	Mean	Std.	
Cognitive awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	37.04	3.33	22.72	2.33	**14.320
Emotional awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	34.72	3.57	21.40	1.84	**13.320
Behavioral awareness of the dangers of electronic blackmail	34.16	3.46	21.52	2.16	**12.640
The scale as a whole	105.9	6.75	65.65	4.41	**40.280

Table (7) demonstrates that there were significant differences between the average scores of the post-measurement of the control and experimental group cases on the dimension of the cognitive awareness on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail in favor of the experimental group; the value of $t = 14.320^{**}$, which is significant at the level (0.01).

Besides, Table (7) highlights that there were some differences between the cases of the control group and the cases of the experimental group regarding their average scores for the post-measurement on the dimensions of the scale in favor of the experimental group.

The results of the table confirm the validity of the fourth hypothesis of the study: There were statistically significant differences between the average scores of the post-measurement of the members of the control and experimental groups on the scale of awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail in favor of the experimental group.

Discussion:

The results of the study demonstrated the validity of the first hypothesis. The results of the pre-measurement of the two groups showed a weak degree of awareness of the electronic blackmail dangers. Moreover, there was homogeneity between the cases of the control group and the experimental group in terms of their average scores for the pre-measurement on the scale as a whole, suggesting

their homogeneity before applying the professional intervention program. This confirms the need for young people to increase their awareness of electronic blackmail hazards. This aligns with Rafai (2017) who was concerned with the importance of social awareness of electronic crimes in Egypt. Rafai's study aimed to highlight the current reality of electronic crime, its methods, and causes and concluded that the media, the Internet, and friends constitute the sources of knowledge of electronic crime.

The results confirmed the validity of the second hypothesis of the study. The study showed that there was no change in the level of awareness of the control group participants about the dangers of electronic blackmail in terms of the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions, meaning that it remained intact.

The current study concluded that group discussion methods affected the level of awareness of the experimental group subjects about the risks of electronic blackmail. This was evident from the differences between the scores of the experimental group participants on the study scale before and after practicing the professional intervention program, which confirms the validity of the third hypothesis of the study. These results are consistent with Niveditha's (2009) findings that group discussion methods contribute to increasing the social performance of group members and helping them exchange and generate more ideas about the problems facing the group. This justifies the effect of the group discussion, i.e., the professional intervention program of the present study. This finding agrees with Abdel-Ati's (2005) that the use of group discussion contributes to reaching collective decisions regarding the problems facing university youth, and it functions as a means of directing the interaction among youth and modifying their attitudes towards society.

The results of the current study showed that the levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail among the experimental group participants increased positively after practicing professional intervention activities using group discussion methods, while the level of awareness of the control group participants remained unchanged. This is due to the effect of practicing the professional intervention program for the experimental group and isolating the control group from the professional intervention program, which confirms the validity of the fourth study hypothesis.

The professional intervention program using group discussion methods caused a positive change in most participants on the study scale, as the percentage of change reached (27.3%), which indicates the success of the professional intervention program in developing awareness of the risks of electronic blackmail among the experimental group subjects. Furthermore, the efficiency of the program was evident from comparing the results of both the pre-and post-measurement of the experimental group and by observing the changes that occurred in the group members during periodic meetings and evaluation meetings. In addition, the study suggested that group discussions play an important role in developing awareness among university youth, especially with regard to the dangers of electronic blackmail, by organizing the dialogue style, creating an effective interaction between the participants about the raised issues, expanding opportunities for expressing their opinions and needs during the interaction in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy.

The limitations of the current study entail some challenges in conducting the research. First, it was difficult to convince some students to regularly participate in the professional intervention program at the beginning of the program. However, this was handled by using persuasion methods and explaining the impact of the program in developing their awareness. Second, some participants in the experimental group did not attend the activities of the professional intervention program regularly. The third limitation is represented in the weak participation of some participants in the experimental group in the activities of the professional intervention program, which may be due to the culture of silence and fear among some young people of revealing the situations of electronic blackmail that they are subjected to.

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