

**Alexithymia and its relationship to emotional stability
in the light of some demographic variables**

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Abstract

The current study aimed to identify alexithymia and its relationship to emotional stability among undergraduate students. The sample consisted of (200), Divided "100" males and "100" females. and the study used the following tools: the alexithymia scale (prepared by the researcher) and the emotional balance scale (prepared by the researcher). The study reached the following results: - There is no statistically significant relationship between alexithymia and emotional balance among students in light of age. There is no statistically significant relationship between alexithymia and emotional balance in light of gender.

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The introduction:

Although many researchers neglected the study of human feelings, as their treatment was limited to the study of psychological conflicts, despite this, feelings and emotions are an important and essential factor in building an individual's personality, so their study represented a very important axis in psychological studies. Including the study of alexithymia, which is a significant dysfunction in perceiving an individual's emotions that hinders his connection with others and leads to many life difficulties, including the difficulty of maintaining emotional social relationships, whether friendship or love. Although alexithymia is not a mental disorder, it brings all kinds of difficulties to people who suffer from it. .

Alexithymia was defined in the dictionary of psychiatric terms as the inability to express, the non-descriptive, and it means the inability to express, the inability or the difficulty of describing emotions and emotions, or the lack of awareness of inner feelings. (Ahmed Salih Omar, 2007: 7)

The roots of the term alexithymia go back to the observations of Ruesch in 1948, who noted the inability of patients with psychosomatic disorders (psycho-somatic) to express their feelings verbally, and considered that they had an immature or childish personality, as Ruesch also noted that these patients are characterized by weak imagination, and they use movements Direct physical as a means of emotional expression. In 1949 Maclean also found a group of psychosomatic patients unable to express their feelings verbally as a result of the neurological deficit between the cerebral cavity and the cerebral cortex, and Maclean believed that the inability to express feelings leads to physiological changes from which physical diseases arise (Timoney, Holder, 2013,7

Alexithymia is a multidimensional psychological concept that includes four basic characteristics: the difficulty of identifying emotions and distinguishing them from physical sensations resulting from emotional arousal, the difficulty of expressing emotions, limited imagination, and an externally oriented cognitive style (Taylor, Parker, Bagley & Bourke, 2016, 562.(

Kobasa concluded that reactive balance is a set of psychological characteristics that include the variables of commitment, clarity of purpose, control and challenge, and these characteristics would maintain psychological and physical health and psychological security despite exposure to stressful events (Fadl Abdel Samad, 2012: 229).

research importance

First: The theoretical importance:

- This study is one of the rare studies that dealt with this subject, and this is within the limits of the researcher's knowledge.
- This study deals with alexithymia and reflexive balance among university students.

Second: the applied importance::

- 1- Draw the attention of those in charge of the educational process.
- 2- Establishing treatment programs aimed at enhancing emotional balance and how to control alexithymia..
- 3- Benefit from the results of the study to conduct other studies related to this field.

Terminology of study

Alexithymia:

In the current study, alexithymia is defined as: “a trait or condition that represents difficulty in cognitive processing of emotions and a clear lack of emotional skills that include the ability to identify and express emotions and outward-directed thinking (Taylor, Bagby & Parker, 1997, 39).

The dimensions of alexithymia are as follows:

- 1- **Difficulty identifying emotions:** This dimension refers to the weakness of the individual's ability to perceive or identify his feelings.
- 2- **Difficulty expressing emotions:** This dimension refers to the weakness of the individual's ability to express his feelings to others.
- 3- **Outward oriented thinking:** This dimension refers to the lack of reflective competence of the individual.

Alexithymia is operationally defined as the degree obtained by the subject on the alexithymia scale used in the current study (prepared by the researcher).

Emotional balance

(Lulwa Hamada and Hassan Abdel Latif, 2002: 233) define it as: a source of personal self-resources to resist the negative effects of life pressures and mitigate their effects on mental and physical health. Emotional balance contributes to facilitating the existence of this kind of realization, correction and confrontation, which leads to a successful solution to the situation created by the stressful circumstances. Therefore, emotional balance reduces the impact of pressure and contributes to helping individuals to continue to reconcile.

It is expressed in the total responses obtained by the parents in the measure of psychological hardness in its dimensions (commitment - control - challenge – patience).

1- Commitment:

It is the individual's adoption of specific values, principles, beliefs, and goals, his adherence to them, and his taking responsibility for them, himself and his society, and it is tantamount to contracting with oneself on the need to actually achieve what is required of him.

2-Control:

It is represented in the individual's ability to anticipate the occurrence of difficult situations based on his extrapolation of reality, and to develop appropriate plans to confront them and minimize their effects when they occur, investing all available material and moral capabilities and mental strategies, controlling himself and controlling his emotions, which means the individual's self-ability to Cohesion and control of himself and his ability to withstand the difficulties and crises of life, and this includes steadfastness and control of himself and take responsibility and the ability to make a decision and choose between alternatives.

3- Challenge:

The individual's ability to effectively confront life crises and make efforts to overcome obstacles to reach the desired goals, and to create feelings of optimism in accepting new experiences. And social, and help the individual to adapt in the face of stressful life events and painful crises.

4- Patience

It is the individual's ability to withhold oneself from anxiety and discontent, withhold the tongue from complaining, withhold the limbs from confusion, be patient with adversity, accept it with peace of mind, not regret what has passed, and not be pessimistic.

Theoretical framework of the research:

The first axis: alexithymia

Peter Sifneos, a psychologist at Harvard University, presented in 1967 his clinical observations on a group of patients with psychosomatic diseases, and the most distinctive observation was the inability of these patients to find appropriate words to describe their feelings (Taylor, Bagby & Parker, 2016, 1007.)

Krystal also noted in 1968 a lack of drug addicts, alcoholics and other psychosomatic disorders in the ability to express feelings, and attributed this to suppressing feelings as a result of psychological trauma in early childhood. Then Peter Sifnius came in 1973 and used the term alexithymia, which is a Greek word consisting of the letter (A), meaning: deficiency, (lexi) meaning: word, (thymos) meaning: emotion, and then Sifnius described alexithymia as the lack of words to express feelings (Lack, Words, Feeling), which leads the individual to a physical disorder and psychosomatic conditions associated with it (Victoria Goleman, 2000: 78). Maclean also found a group of psychosomatic patients who were unable to express their feelings verbally as a result of the neural deficit between the cerebral cavity and the cerebral cortex, and Maclean believed that the inability to express feelings leads to physiological changes from which physical diseases arise (Timoney, Holder, 2013, 7).

Psychoanalyst Karen Horney put the same situation to some of her patients who do not respond well to psychotherapy because they are emotionally unconscious and have very little experience in expressing their inner feelings. And these psychosomatic patients often show psychosomatic symptoms, and in order to reduce their tension and suppress their emotions, they often binge on eating or perform compulsive behaviors, so it is said about these patients: They are emotionally illiterate (Ahmed Al-Samdouni, 2007: 258).

Definition of alexithymia

Sifneos (1988,138) defined alexithymia as: “a functional disorder in some of the emotional and cognitive functions, which is represented in the inability to identify feelings and distinguish between them and the physical sensations accompanying them, in addition to the weakness of the ability to use appropriate words in describing feelings, as well as Lack of imagination, outward oriented thinking pattern.

Burch (1995, 13) defines it as: "a deficiency in the ability to identify feelings, a limited imagination, and a way of thinking that relies more on the experiences of others than on one's own experience".

)Salah al-Din Iraqi, 2006: 196) defines it as "the limited ability to represent and contain feelings with words and fantasies and reflect on their meanings, that is: the individual's inability to appreciate the detailed knowledge of emotional excitement".

There are many definitions of alexithymia, but they revolve around one framework, which is the lack of the ability to understand and express feelings. We will mention the following from these definitions:

The dictionary of the American Psychological Association (APA) indicates that alexithymia is the inability of the individual to distinguish or express his emotions, and it may appear in many disorders, especially psychosomatic disorders, some drug abuse disorders, or after repeated exposure to stress (APA, 2007, 35).

And (Muhammad Al-Buhairi, 2009: 822) defines it as “an affective-cognitive characteristic that is evident in the presence of deficiencies in dealing with feelings and emotions, and appears in the form of difficulty in recognizing and distinguishing one’s own feelings, and difficulty in emotional verbal communication, that is: difficulty in expressing feelings and feelings.” towards others as a result of the absence of appropriate words to describe feelings, with the absence of disturbances in the vocal system or the weakness of the senses of hearing and speech - in addition to the lack of the ability to imagine related to feelings, which leads to a deficiency in the skill of

dealing with others, and the individual is predisposed to contracting disorders and mental and physical diseases.

Iman Attia(2017: 148) explains that alexithymia is a difficulty in understanding the individual's emotions and distinguishing between them, and a deficiency in the ability to express and describe them, which is reflected in the individual's inability to understand the emotions of others, which weakens the friendship between him and them, and this is due to the weakness of the ability to Cognitive regulation of emotions and a deficiency in the cognitive processing of emotions and feelings, and this is accompanied by a weakness in the ability to imagine, reflect and innovate, which prompts the individual to think for an external direction, which makes the individual take the opinions and ideas of others and take them as a criterion for judging his behaviors, emotions and performance.

From the foregoing, it became clear that Sifnius and the Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry defined alexithymia as a disorder, while alexithymia was not classified as a psychological or mental disorder except in the fifth Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), but it was mentioned in the fifth edition under sexual disorders as a deficit in Cognitive processing of emotions (Deficits, In, Cognitive, Processing, Of, Emotions), and stated that it is more prevalent in men who have erectile dysfunction (DSM-5, 2013, 428)

The researcher believes, through the previous definitions, that alexithymia expresses the difficulty of the individual in understanding his own emotions and the emotions of others and expressing them verbally. He also finds it difficult to distinguish between them and the feelings associated with them. Individuals with alexithymia have an outward-oriented thinking style and it is one of the causative factors of psychosomatic diseases.

The researcher adopts Taylor's definition of alexithymia in the current study, which he defines as follows: "a trait or condition that represents difficulty in cognitive processing of emotions and a clear lack of emotional skills that include the ability to identify and express emotions and outward-directed thinking".

Characteristics of individuals with alexithymia

Alexithymia is a multidimensional psychological concept that includes four basic characteristics: the difficulty of identifying emotions and distinguishing them from physical sensations resulting from emotional arousal, the difficulty of expressing emotions, limited imagination, and an externally oriented cognitive style (Taylor, Parker, Bagloy & Bourke, 2016, 562), The following details these characteristics:

1- Difficulty perceiving emotions

It is represented in the weakness of the ability of individuals with alexithymia to understand the emotional (affective) state that they are going through, as they cannot recognize feelings and distinguish them from physical sensations (Hesse, 2009,1), so Goleman mentioned that these individuals suffer from the problem of distinguishing between different emotions, such as emotion And the physical sense, to the extent that they say: their stomachs suffer from disorder, their heartbeat accelerates, they sweat, and they feel dizzy, but they do not know that what they suffer from is anxiety (Victoria Goleman, 2000: 79-80.)

2- Difficulty expressing emotions:

The expression of emotions is something that a person acquires from the surrounding environment as much as it is instinctive in a person. Alexithymia includes difficulty in expressing the emotions that an individual feels, and describing them using words that indicate what he feels. It is also characterized by a deficiency in the individual in owning a linguistic outcome. It indicates his feelings and emotions, and a failure to program emotions into spoken language.

Where individuals with alexithymia feel a weakness in the level of emotion coding, and a weakness in the cognitive perception to process the emotional experience, these individuals have difficulty describing their feelings and expressing them to others, as they have a paucity of language vocabulary and a lack of words used to express their emotions (Volkan, T, & Kuscu , M, 2004, 178-181).

Therefore, we find that these individuals lack the role that emotions play in directing and directing their human life in the right

direction, as they find it difficult to understand and respond to others in social situations, which leads to poor personal and social compatibility and forces them to isolate. As the difficulty of expressing feelings towards others hinders the establishment of social relationships (Iman Al-Banna, 2003: 20). The study (Yelsma, et al, 2003) and the study (Awatef Saleh, 2007) concluded that the expression of emotions and the expression of intimacy have a major role in improving the quality of marriage and reaching a state of satisfaction and compatibility.

3-Outward oriented thinking:

Due to the weakness of the ability of individuals with alexithymia to understand themselves in the world of feelings and emotions, they direct themselves towards the physical world full of external subjects and sensory facts, so they are called "human machines" (Thompson, 2009,11).

The externally directed way of thinking is represented in paying attention to the details of unimportant matters more than paying attention to the causes, experiences, and circumstances behind things, as well as focusing on physical sensations more than emotional alertness, where physical illness is an expression of psychological illness, and we find the individual with alexithymia describing his physical condition with ease But he cannot mention that something is bothering him or that he is anxious or sad, because of the absence of the ability to express feelings and not the absence of the feelings themselves. We also find that guiding behavior in alexithymic individuals is through rules, regulations and expectations of others and not through feelings, desires and personal values. (Zhong–Hua, Li, & Hao, 2005, 159-161).

Through the foregoing, it was found that alexithymic individuals are characterized by cognitive and emotional difficulties with regard to emotions and expression of feelings, and therefore they lack internal interpersonal skills, with low self-esteem, and they lack effective communication with others, as they are unable to accurately define their own feelings, as well. They do not turn to others as a source of comfort and help in times of emotional need, as they feel that the people around them are a source of frustration and ridicule,

and they do not have empathy skills towards others, as they are ineffective in understanding the emotional state that others go through (Iman Al-Banna, 2003: 26-27). As mentioned (Amal Al-Fiqi, 2012: 219) “that these individuals suffer from the coldness of marital life and the use of negative coping strategies, such as avoidance, due to poor knowledge, the predominance of tension, anxiety and conflict between spouses, lack of comfort, and the difficulty of making the critical decisions that need to be taken.” In life, the lack of psychological support for both, the presence of a high level of aggressiveness, and the lack of resilience.” Naima Muqatari concluded that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between alexithymia and each of the skill of perception and understanding, the skill of verbal and non-verbal communication, the skill of emotion estimation and empathy, and the skill of social influence. And this would affect the marital relationship (Naima Fighters, 2015: 191).

It should also be taken into account that these individuals are not without feelings at all, but they feel, but they are unable to know what their feelings are specifically, especially since they have difficulty expressing them in words, as they lack the basic skill of emotional intelligence, which is self-awareness (i.e. : knowing our feelings when our inner emotions disturb us), these individuals lack words to express their feelings, and therefore appear as if they have no feelings at all (Victoria Goleman, 2000: 79-80)..

components of alexithymia

Bermond and Vorst proposed two components of alexithymia, one emotional and the other cognitive, as follows:

Affective Component:

The affective component of alexithymia is associated with a poor ability to identify emotions and distinguish them from physical sensations, and difficulty in expressing feelings to others, and then these individuals find it difficult to communicate with others, which leads to a decrease in their social support.

Cognitive Component:

The cognitive component of alexithymia is represented in the pattern of externally directed thinking and the lack of imaginative processes. Therefore, alexithymic individuals suffer from a deficit in creativity, and their use of symbols is very limited, as they are characterized by a weak level of coding of feelings and a deficit in cognitive perception to process emotional experience (Timoney, Holder, 2013, 3).

Classification of alexithymia

There are many classifications of alexithymia, as there are those who classified it into primary alexithymia, and secondary alexithymia, and there are those who classified it as a condition and a feature, and we will review that in the following:

1- Alexithymia as a condition and a feature:

There is debate among some researchers about whether alexithymia is a fixed feature or a variable state. Schmidt et al. (1993) observed a group of bulimia nervosa patients for 10 weeks to determine whether alexithymia decreased with decreasing bulimia symptoms. The nervous system?, They found that alexithymia retained its relative stability even after decreasing the symptoms of bulimia nervosa, which supports that alexithymia is a stable personality trait, and this was also supported by Luminet et al. (2000) in their study of depressed individuals with alexithymia showed relative stability of alexithymia after a decrease in depressive symptoms, however Honkalampie, et, al. (2000) found that alexithymia decreased with a decrease in depressive symptoms, indicating that it is a condition that is secondary to for symptoms of mental illness (Berbette, 2012.(

Taylor and others (Taylor, 1997, 37) distinguish between alexithymia as a fixed, independent personality trait in terms of the causes of its appearance that arise when there is a functional defect in the functions of cognitive processing of emotions in the brain as a result of a genetic defect or exposure to accidents that result in surgery, and between alexithymia as a casual condition resulting from exposure to The individual experiences painful psychological experiences that disappear after a change in the stressful situation.

The researcher believes that alexithymia, like many negative psychological symptoms, is a reactive state, which means that its change depends on the course or the onset of other disorders and problems, and that it can develop and appear as a feature.

Primary & Secondary Alexithymia

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In this regard, the results of the study by Jorgensen and others (Jorgensen, Zachariae, Skytthe & Kyvik, 2007) showed that between 30%: 33% of alexithymia cases are due to genetic factors, and between 15%: 20% are due to environmental and genetic factors, and between 47%: 55% due to non-genetic environmental factors, and the prevalence rate among males is higher than females.

Primmer disputes the idea of defining subtypes (primary-secondary) of alexithymia, arguing that it is more likely that there are different degrees of alexithymia, ranging from mere awareness of bodily sensations to full awareness of emotions. Taylor, Parker, and Bagby agree with this view (Inrsen & Van, 2006, 237-243)

Explanatory theoretical orientations of alexithymia

Although many researchers have dealt with the term alexithymia over the course of nearly thirty years, and many variables and factors associated with it have been studied, there are many directions explaining it. Some attribute it to genetic factors, while others attribute it to methods of upbringing and environmental factors. In the light of the psychological analysis of events and the psychological

conflict between the desires of the individual and societal values and ideals, it can also be interpreted in the light of the stimulus and response of the behavioral theory. It has the individual as interpreted by trauma theory. Here are some of the theories that explain it:

1- Cognitive Theory

Cognitive theory confirms the existence of a relationship between what we think about and what we feel about it, but the main element in our feeling of emotion is our interpretation of the situation that provokes the emotion. Hence, alexithymia, according to this theory, is an emotional state that reflects the individual's inability to perceive and interpret the emotional situation, which leads to a confused emotional response. During it, the individual is unable to differentiate between his feelings and the physiological responses accompanying the emotional situation or the emotional experience situation (Hisham El-Khouly, 2013: 171).

2-Theory Analytical:

Analysts consider (disclosure) alexithymia as a feature that reveals factual thinking due to a failure to encode conflicts, and the impossibility of forming a delusional image of the body. It has symptoms of emotional depression and increases the patient's susceptibility to psychosomatic diseases (Jeammet, 2000).

Concealment as a case is caused by the fear of contracting a serious organic disease or because of traumatic factors. Repression is then considered a defense mechanism that focuses on rejection and denial in order to avoid the person's painful emotional experience in situations of weakness (Zaathout Ramadan, Qureshi Abdul Karim, 2008: 98).

3-Shock Theory:

Reddy (2009) argued that alexithymia is a method of coping with trauma. Alexithymia is either a means of coping and dealing with psychological pressures and negative emotions associated with physical abuse in childhood, or it is a result of the inability to coexist and deal effectively with psychological pressures.

In the light of the foregoing, it is clear that there is a multiplicity of viewpoints that explain alexithymia. Some of them consider that alexithymia is the result of going through violent traumatic

experiences, or is due to observing and imitating models of alexithymia. Some of them see how it relates to genetic predisposition, and some of them consider it to be due to early developmental disorders, or As a result of insecure attachment styles in childhood. The researcher adopts the integrative theory when interpreting alexithymia.

Risks and consequences of alexithymia:

There are many psychological and social risks that result from alexithymia, as they are associated with many psychological problems that are associated with it, and we summarize them in the following aspects

Psychosomatic organic diseases:

- internal conflicts and personality disorders Sleep disorders and internal conflicts.
- Decreased quality of life Poor psychological compatibility.

Low level of self-esteem.

- Using immature defensive mechanisms.-
- Feeling of psychological loneliness.-

Negative, dependent, and avoidant behavior.

- . aggressiveness-
- Depression and social anxiety.-

Eating problems such as anorexia nervosa and anorexia nervosa.

- Sleep disorders and internal conflicts.
- Low psychological resilience and emotional intelligence.

Therefore, alexithymia is considered one of the most important predictors of many psychological, behavioral and physiological disorders, and the negative consequences of it can be stated as follows:

1-hysiological results:

Alexithymia is associated with psychosomatic diseases, as the more emotional energy is hindered from releasing and the greater its accumulation, the individual responds at the level of his body, but without emptying this energy into concepts and words, so the result is a state of physical emotion that does not perform an adaptive function

and does not empty energy. Examples of psychosomatic disorders resulting from alexithymia include colitis, heart disease, migraines, tension headaches, respiratory diseases, angina pectoris, heart diseases, and others

(Domenico, Gianni, & Chiara, 2009, 67).

2-Behavioral outcomes

Alexithymia is associated with some wrong behaviors, such as: sleep disorders, obesity, eating disorders, and laziness. I also found many studies that confirmed the existence of a relationship between alexithymia and alcohol addiction, and drug addiction. And because individuals with alexithymia do not have the ability to communicate with others, we find that these individuals do not have the ability to empathize with others, avoid merging with others, and tend to isolate (Hesse, 26, 2009). The study (Hesse, 2009) and the study (Hesse, Floyed, 2011) indicated that there is a negative relationship between alexithymia and positive social interactions among a sample of students, where alexithymia affects the ability of individuals to build relationships and draw attention in social interactions. Alexithymia people have a weakness in the ability to have emotional harmony in relationships compared to non-alexithymias, and the study reached this by examining the sensory, behavioral, and physiological results of alexithymias during initial interactions and comparing that with non-alexithymias. The results indicated that individuals with alexithymia feel low levels of social influence with their partners, and are less sociable and attracted to tasks with their partners compared to non-alexithymic people, and alexithymic people have lower levels of (confidence, poise, and mental calm), as well as lower levels of (head nodding, facial changes, gaze, smile, and expression of their emotions) with their partners.

3-Psychological results:

It was found that individuals with high levels of alexithymia suffer from high depression, low quality of life, low satisfaction with life, anxiety, high neuroticism, low extraversion, low openness to experience, and the inability to deal with psychological stress. A study (Posse, Hallstrom & Backenroth, 2002) indicated that there is an inverse relationship between alexithymia and social support for a

married female, and a positive relationship between alexithymia and psychological and social stress. Individuals who suffer from alexithymia do not have the ability to express their feelings, and therefore they do not receive social support from Others, and they do not have the ability to understand the feelings of others and empathize with them, so the psychological pressure of these females increases, and the study (Foran, O'leary, 2013) indicated that there is a positive relationship between alexithymia and depression in a sample of students; Where alexithymia leads to depression by affecting the interpersonal relationships of individuals, alexithymia leads to less social support, poor intimacy, poor marital compatibility, and then leads to depression.

The second axis: psychological balance:

Psychological balance is an important and vital factor of personality in the field of psychology, and it is a crucial factor in improving psychological performance, mental and physical health, as well as maintaining behaviors. This factor has been studied extensively in the work of Suzanne Kobasa (1979). Where it turned out that Kobaza's psychological balance consists of control, commitment, challenge, and most researchers agreed with Kobaza in that, and he mentioned psychological balance as an important factor in explaining why some people can resist pressure and not get sick? This is what made psychological balance a fertile field for continuous research, theorizing, and practice.

The concept of psychological balance

And (Sayed Al-Bahas, 2002: 391) defined it as: the individual's awareness and acceptance of the variables and psychological pressures he is exposed to, as it works as a protection against the sensory and psychological consequences of pressures, and contributes to modifying the circular relationship that begins with pressures and ends with psychological exhaustion as an advanced stage of pressures.

I also defined it as: the individual's belief in the occurrence of stressful events and seeing them as severe situations that can be controlled. (Hanim Abu Al-Khair, 2005: 355)

(Nabil Dukhan, and Bashir Al-Hajjar, 2005: 373) defines emotional balance as: a general belief of the individual in his effectiveness and his ability to use all available psychological and environmental resources, in order to realize, interpret, and confront effectively the stressful events of life.

Dimensions of emotional balance:

Kobasa (1979) came up with three dimensions that make up emotional balance, namely: commitment, control, and challenge. The researcher believes that two dimensions can be added, which are patience, due to their suitability for the Kuwaiti environment, which is characterized by embracing the Islamic religion.

These dimensions can be dealt with in some detail as follows:

1- Commitment

The commitment component is one of the components of emotional balance most closely related to the protective role of balance as a source of resistance to hardship stimuli.

Definition of commitment:

Commitment is defined as the individual's belief in the need to adopt specific values and goals towards the various activities of life, and the need to bear responsibility towards these values, principles and goals. (Zainab Radhi, 2008: 23-24).

2-Control:

Definition of control:

It was referred to by Kobasa (2016:849) as: the belief of the individual that the changing situations and conditions of life that he is exposed to are predictable, predictable and controllable.

3-Challenge:

Definition of challenge:

The third and last component of emotional balance is: challenge versus feeling threatened. Kobasa (2016) defines challenge as: the individual's belief that renewed change in life events is a natural, even inevitable matter for his advancement, rather than a threat to his security and self-confidence. And his psychological well-being. (Zainab Radi, 2008: 29).

4-Patience:

The best thing with which a person faces the events of life and the misfortunes of the world, and the best tool is patience in the face of adversity. Patience is faith, as it is a cover from adversity and a help in troubles. one who hates.

The importance of emotional balance:

Emotional balance is one of the important and fundamental factors of personality in improving psychological performance and mental and physical health, as well as maintaining healthy behaviors. On his pressing problems, and emotional balance acts as a protection factor from physical diseases and psychological disorders. (Zainab Radi, 2008: 51).

Characteristics of emotional balance:

Taylor, 1995:261, listed the characteristics of people with emotional balance as follows:

- 1- A sense of commitment, or the intention to push oneself to engage in any developments that review them.
- 2- Belief of control, that is, the feeling that the person himself is the cause of the event that occurred in his life, and that he is the one who can influence his environment.
- 3- The challenge, which is the desire to bring about change, and to confront new activities that are similar or serve as opportunities for growth and development.

The researcher believes that the previous characteristics of people with low emotional balance do not agree with them from her point of view, as they are traits that vary between individuals, and situations, events and training work on their gradual development.

Study procedures

1)The alexithymia scale (prepared by: the researcher:

Through his extrapolation of psychological literature and alexithymia scales, the researcher was able to reach the following dimensions:

- The first dimension: the difficulty of perceiving emotions.
- The second dimension: the difficulty of expressing emotions.
- The third dimension: outward oriented thinking.

In the light of these dimensions, the researcher created and borrowed some phrases such as (Hisham Al-Khouli (2013) and the study of Naima Fahd Muqatili (2015) and the study of Muhammad Al-Sayyid Al-Buhairi (2009) with some modifications to them to suit each dimension. This procedure ended up becoming The number of phrases for each dimension is (10) phrases, and the five-point rating was relied upon for each response, and the scores range on the scale for each of (150) degrees to (30) degrees, where the high score indicates high alexithymia, while the low score represents low alexithymia. Besides this, some phrases were formulated positively, while others were negatively formulated.

Psychometric characteristics of the alexithymia scale:

The psychometric efficiency of the alexithymia scale was calculated according to the following:

First: honesty:

1-The referred validity:

The dimensions of the alexithymia scale were presented to a committee of professors of psychology and mental health consisting of (10) arbitrators, to judge the validity of the statements of each dimension of the alexithymia scale. The committee agreed on the validity of the expressions of the dimensions of the alexithymia scale, with the introduction of some minor modifications in the formulation of some of the expressions.

2-The validity of the criterion:

The correlation coefficient was calculated using the Pearson method between scores on the current scale (prepared by the researcher) and their scores on the alexithymia scale prepared by Khamis (2014) as an external test. The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.617), which is a function at the level of (0.01) on a sample of (200) Divided "100" males and "100" females. Individual, which indicates the validity of the current scale.

3-Community: The basic study sample of (200) students in the third band at the faculty of Education at Kuwait University Scrained as follows:

The male	100
Female	100

The researcher applying study tools on the third band at the faculty of Education at The Kuwait University for The academic year 2023.2024.

Second: Balance:

The stability of the alexithymia scale was calculated in the following ways:

1- Test-retest reliability:

This was done by calculating the stability of the alexithymia scale by re-application with a time interval of two weeks on the psychometric characteristics sample, and the correlation coefficients between the scores of the sample were extracted using the Pearson coefficient, and this is shown in Table (1)

Table no (1)

Results of stability of alexithymia by reapplication method

Correlation coefficient between the first and second applications	Dimensional
0.714**	Difficulty perceiving emotions
0.669**	Difficulty expressing emotions
0.739**	Outward oriented thinking
0.771**	Total score

**A function at the level of significance of 0.01

Table (1) shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between the first application and the second application of the dimensions of the alexithymia scale, and the total score, which indicates the stability of the scale, and this confirms the validity of the alexithymia scale to measure the characteristic for which it was developed.

2-Cronbach's alpha coefficient method:

The stability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha equation. Table (2) shows the stability values of the scale using the Vachronbach equation:

Table no (2) The stability of the alexithymia scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha equation

Cronbach's Alpha	Dimensions
0.784	Difficulty perceiving emotions
0.695	Difficulty expressing emotions
0.744	Outward oriented thinking
0.774	Total score

It is clear from Table (2) that the equilibrium coefficients are high, which gives a good indicator of the stability of the scale, and accordingly it can be used.

3-The split-half method .

The stability of the scale was calculated using split half using both the Spearman-Brown and Guttman equation.

Table no (3) shows the equilibrium coefficients using the split-half method for the alexithymia scale

Jetman	Spearman Bran	Dimensions
0.695	0.848	Difficulty perceiving emotions
0.741	0.895	Difficulty expressing emotions
0.709	0.796	Outward oriented thinking
0.726	0.871	Total score

It is clear from Table (3) that the stability coefficients of the scale for each of its dimensions using the Spearman-Brown half-partition method are close to those of the Jutman method, which indicates that the scale has a high degree of stability in its measurement of alexithymia.

Third: internal consistency:

1-The internal consistency of the item with the total degree of its dimension:

This is done through the scores of the psychometric efficiency verification sample by finding the Pearson correlation coefficient between the scores of each item and the total score for each dimension.

Table no (4)

Correlation coefficients between the scores of each item and the total score of the dimensions on the alexithymia scale (n = 200)

Outward oriented thinking		Difficulty expressing emotions		Difficulty perceiving emotions	
Correlation coefficient	Phrase number	Correlation coefficient	Phrase number	Correlation coefficient	Phrase number
0.454**	1	0.322*	1	0.650**	1
0.352*	2	0.341*	2	0.286*	2
0.545**	3	0.393*	3	0.599**	3
0.656**	4	0.427**	4	0.552**	4
0.490**	5	0.396**	5	0.514**	5
0.520**	6	0.418**	6	0.477**	6
0.377**	7	0.503**	7	0.560**	7
0.425**	8	0.481**	8	0.364**	8
0.404**	9	0.414**	9	0.353*	9
0.647**	10	0.412**	10	0.447**	10

* A function at the level of significance of 0.05 ** A function at the level of significance 0.01

It is evident from Table (4) that all items of the alexithymia scale have positive and statistically significant correlation coefficients at two levels (0.01 and 0.05), meaning that they enjoy internal consistency.

2-The internal consistency of the dimensions of the alexithymia scale:

The internal consistency coefficients were calculated for the dimensions of the alexithymia scale, by calculating the correlation coefficient between the degree of each dimension. Table (5) shows the coefficients of internal consistency of the dimensions of the scale, and the statistical significance:

Table no (5)

The coefficients of internal consistency of the dimensions of the alexithymia scale, and the statistical significance

total	3	2	1	Dimensions
			-	Difficulty perceiving emotions
		-	0.658**	Difficulty expressing emotions
	-	0.625**	0.587**	Outward oriented thinking
-	0.614**	0.474**	0.647**	Total score

**A function at the level of significance of 0.01

The results showed in Table (5) that the correlation coefficients for the dimensions of the alexithymia scale through the correlation matrix are all high values.

Final scale image:

Thus, the final version of the scale, which is valid for application, has been reached, and it includes (30) items. The researcher has rearranged the items of the final image of the scale, and the instructions of the scale have been formulated, so that the highest total score obtained by the subject is (150), and the lowest score is (150). (30), high scores represent the most severe level of alexithymia while low scores represent low level alexithymia..

Scale instructions:

- 1-When applying the scale, an atmosphere of familiarity must be created with the students, so that this is reflected in their sincerity in the answer.
- 2-The person applying the scale must explain that there is no specific time for the answer, and the answer will be kept strictly confidential.
- 3-The application is done in an individual way, in order to ensure that the answer is not random.
- 4- All statements must be answered, because the more unanswered statements, the lower the accuracy of the results.

Second: the emotional balance scale (prepared by the researcher)(The goal of the scale:

(A)The researcher designed and built a scale aimed at measuring the emotional stability of the students.

b) Scale description

The scale consists of (40) items, and the researcher divided the emotional balance scale into four dimensions: commitment, control, challenge, and patience. The highest score for the scale is (200), and the lowest score for the scale is (40). appropriate modifications.

(c) Grade Description

Positive expressions for grades (5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1) are given in return for the responses (strongly agree - agree - neutral - disagree - strongly disagree) in order, and negative expressions are given for grades (1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5) in The corresponding responses (strongly disagree - oppose - neutral - agree - strongly agree) in order.

(d) Psychometric properties of the emotional balance scale (prepared by the researcher

First: the validity of the scale:

1-The referred validity

The scale was presented to a group of professors specialized in the field of psychology and mental health, who numbered (6) arbitrators, to determine the suitability of each of the phrases for the objective that was set to measure it, and to know the clarity of the style and wording of each phrase, and the phrases that were agreed upon (83% of the arbitrators in terms of its validity and suitability to measure the phenomenon that was set to measure it.

2-Sincerity of internal consistency

The internal consistency of the scale was calculated by calculating the correlation coefficient between the scores of the sample on each statement and the total score of the emotional balance scale and the dimension to which it belongs.

Table no (6) Correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the dimension to which it belongs in the emotional balance scale (n = 200)

correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number
.741**	31	.655**	21	.641**	11	.442**	1
.622**	32	.767**	22	.719**	12	.532**	2
.711**	33	.618**	23	.464**	13	.228	3
.664**	34	.503**	24	.633**	14	.613**	4
.594**	35	.556**	25	.452**	15	.524**	5
.710**	36	.714**	26	.732**	16	.614**	6
.184	37	.478**	27	.508**	17	.442**	7
.493**	38	.224	28	.671**	18	.608**	8
.739**	39	.302*	29	.816**	19	.0479**	9
.647**	40	.557**	30	.620**	20	.224	10

**Significance level = 0.01 * Significance level = 0.05

It is clear from the previous table that most of the values of the correlation coefficients are statistically significant at the level of significance (0.01), except that phrases No. (3, 10, 28, 37) were reformulated, as they were unclear and incomprehensible to the respondents.

The emotional balance scale was re-applied, after reformulating its weak calibrations, on another sample, and the correlation coefficient was calculated between the scores of the respondents on each statement and the total score of the emotional balance scale.

Table no (7) Correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the emotional poise scale, after restating the weakly correlated statements (n = 200)

correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number	correlating with the total score	Phrase number
.442**	31	.524**	21	.304*	11	.442**	1
.452**	32	.464**	22	.641**	12	.479**	2
.618**	33	.655**	23	.816**	13	.508**	3
.41**	34	.302*	24	.478**	14	.556**	4
.493**	35	.710**	25	.664**	15	.622**	5
.608**	36	.614**	26	.613**	16	.532**	6
.732**	37	.633**	27	.619**	17	.289*	7
.503**	38	.762**	28	.620**	18	.671**	8

correlatin g with the total score	Phrase number	correlatin g with the total score	Phrase number	correlatin g with the total score	Phrase number	correlatin g with the total score	Phrase number
739** .	39	557** .	29	287* .	19	714** .	9
647** .	40	288* .	30	594** .	20	711** .	10

**Significance level = 0.01

* Significance level = 0.05

It is clear from the previous table that the majority of the expressions of the emotional balance scale enjoyed a high degree in their correlation with the total score of the scale, and most of the correlation coefficients were statistically significant at a level less than (0.01), which indicates that the scale has high consistency.

The internal consistency of the scale was calculated by calculating the correlation coefficient between the item (phrase) and the total score of the dimension to which it belongs.

Table no (8) Correlation coefficients between the score of each statement and the total score of the dimension to which it belongs

For the emotional balance scale (n = 200)

patience		challenge		control		Commitment	
Link to dimension	Phrase number	Link to dimension	Phrase number	Link to dimension	Phrase number	Link to dimension	Phrase number
689** .	4	660** .	3	708** .	2	689** .	1
737** .	9	710** .	8	414** .	7	** . ξ Ψ ξ	6
704** .	14	852** .	13	725** .	12	462** .	11
404** .	19	585** .	18	569** .	17	700** .	16
371** .	24	739** .	23	612** .	22	652** .	21
643** .	29	671** .	28	630** .	27	636** .	26
735** .	34	628** .	33	571** .	32	689** .	31
		622** .	38	625** .	37	686** .	36

**Significance level = 0.01

* Significance level = 0.05

It is clear from the previous table that the majority of the expressions of the emotional balance scale enjoyed a high degree in their correlation with the total score of the dimension, and most of the correlation coefficients were statistically significant at a level less than (0.01), which indicates that the scale has a high consistency.

Second: the stability of the scale:

The stability of the emotional balance scale was extracted using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, whose value for the total score was

(0.938), and this score is considered a high value for the stability of the scale. A high value for the stability of the scale, and the following table shows the balance coefficients for all dimensions of the scale, which shows that the scale has good stability coefficients

Table no (9)

Stability coefficients of the emotional balance scale

hash half	while Cronbach alpha (n = 200)	Dimension mitigation position
911.	747.	Commitment
933.	746.	Control
605.	765.	Challenge
835.	747.	Patience
930.	938.	Total score

Study results and discussion:**Checking the results of the first hypothesis.:**

The hypothesis states that "there is no statistically significant relationship between alexithymia and emotional balance among students in light of age".

To validate this hypothesis, the values of Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the dimensions of each of the students' alexithymia and emotional balance in light of age. Table (10) shows that:

Table no (10)

The values of the correlation coefficients between alexithymia and emotional balance among students in light of age (n = 200)

alexithymia				Emotional balance,
Total score	Outward oriented thinking	Difficulty expressing emotions	Difficulty perceiving emotions	
0.853**	0.671**	0.694**	0.765**	Commitment
0.832**	0.745**	0.684**	0.641**	Control
0.746**	0.652**	0.706**	0.534**	Challenge
0.734**	0.679**	0.591**	0.550**	Patience
0.885**	0.764**	0.739**	0.708**	Total score

**a function of 0.01

It is clear from Table (10) that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between alexithymia and emotional balance among students in light of age at the level (0.01), and from here the zero hypothesis was rejected and replaced with the alternative hypothesis.

Verifying the results of the second hypothesis:

The hypothesis states that: “There is no statistically significant relationship between alexithymia and emotional balance in light of gender.

To validate this hypothesis, the values of the Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the dimensions of each of the students' alexithymia and emotional balance. Table (11) shows that:

Table no (11)
Correlation coefficient values between
alexithymia and emotional stability in males (n = 100)

alexithymia				Emotional balance,
Total score	Outward oriented thinking	Difficulty expressing emotions	Difficulty perceiving emotions	
0.799**	0.574**	0.606**	0.719**	Commitment
0.767**	0.677**	0.581**	0.552**	Control
0.652**	0.553**	0.619**	0.416*	Challenge
0.727**	0.647**	0.575**	0.503*	Patience
0.855**	0.703**	0.681**	0.650**	Total score

**Significance level = 0.01

* Significance level = 0.05

It is clear from Table (11) that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between alexithymia and emotional balance among male students at two levels (0.01, 0.05), and from here the zero hypothesis was rejected and replaced with the alternative hypothesis.

Table no (12)

The values of the correlation coefficients between alexithymia and emotional balance in females (n = 100)

alexithymia				Emotional balance
Total score	Outward oriented thinking	Difficulty expressing emotions	Difficulty perceiving emotions	
-0.419*	-0.421**	-0.777**	-0.034	Commitment
0.717**	0.559**	0.547**	0.590**	Control
0.616**	0.526**	0.496*	0.429*	Challenge
0.707**	0.659**	0.550**	0.474*	Patience
0.711**	0.604**	0.530**	0.559**	Total score

**function at 0.01 * function at 0.05

It is clear from Table (12) that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between alexithymia and emotional balance among female students at two levels (0.01, 0.05), and from here the zero hypothesis was rejected and replaced with the alternative hypothesis.

Discuss the results of the study

Where (Atiyah, 148, 2017) explains that alexithymia is a difficulty in understanding the individual's emotions and distinguishing between them, and a deficiency in the ability to express and describe them, which is reflected in the individual's inability to understand the emotions of others, which weakens the friendship between him and them, and this is due to the weakness of the ability On the cognitive regulation of emotions and a deficiency in the cognitive processing of emotions and feelings, and this is accompanied by a weakness in the ability to imagine, reflect and innovate, which pushes the individual to externally directed thinking, which makes the student take the opinions and ideas of others, and take them as a criterion for judging his behaviors, emotions and performance.

Therefore, we find that these students miss the role that emotions play in directing and directing their human life in the right direction, as they find it difficult to understand and respond to others in social

situations, which leads to poor personal and social compatibility and forces them to isolate. As the difficulty of expressing feelings towards others impedes the establishment of social relationships (Al-Banna, 2003, 20). The study (Yelsma, et al, 2003), and the study (Saleh, 2007) concluded that the expression of emotions and the expression of intimacy have a major role in improving the quality of marriage and reaching a state of satisfaction and compatibility.

It should also be taken into account that these students are not without feelings at all, they feel, but they are unable to know what their feelings are precisely, especially since they have difficulty expressing them in words, as they lack the basic skill of emotional intelligence, which is self-awareness (i.e. : knowing our feelings when our inner emotions disturb us), these students lack words to express their feelings, and therefore appear to have no feelings at all (Victoria Goleman, 2000, 79-80.)

Glaser (2015, 67) mentions that "all students need a measure of enjoyment and fun. Some students spend most of their time having fun. One of the results of satisfying this need is avoiding boredom, apathy and depression, and being optimistic and a sense of humor. The word fun refers to fun." Happiness does not mean naivety.

Fourth: Study Recommendations

Based on what the current study revealed, the researcher recommends the following:

- (1) Paying attention to spreading awareness of the youth stage in general through the print, audio and visual media, the problems they face.
- (2) Government institutions provide support to students so that they can preserve them and provide them with basic rights.
- (3) Interest in providing social and material support in all its forms to the individuals of this category.
- (4) Holding training courses for specialists to clarify the problems of this period.

Fifth: Proposed studies

Based on the theoretical framework, previous studies, and the results of the current study, the researcher proposes a number of research topics to find out its results:

- A selective counseling program to improve the emotional stability of students.
- A program based on tolerance to improve the psychological needs of students.
- A program based on psychodrama to reduce alexithymia among students.

The reviewer

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