Psychological Alienation and its Relation to Psychological Security Among Gaza Workers Forcibly Relocated to Jericho City

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ABSTRACT:

Objectives: This study investigates the relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security among workers forcibly displaced from Gaza to Jericho.

Methodology: The descriptive approach was used, where the study sample was selected in the facilitated from among 124 workers forcibly displaced from Gaza to Jericho, and the Psychological Alienation and Security Scale was utilized

Results: The findings show a significant level of psychological alienation among the workers, contrasting with low levels of psychological security. Age emerged as a crucial factor, with older individuals reporting higher levels of alienation and security. The social status and number of children significantly affected these outcomes as well, with married workers and those having more children experiencing greater alienation and lower security levels. An inverse relationship between psychological alienation and security was observed.

Conclusions: The study underscores the profound impact of forced displacement on psychological alienation and security among workers in Gaza, significantly influenced by age, social status, and the number of children. It calls for targeted interventions to meet the psychological needs and enhance the security of displaced workers, considering the fine demographic differences.

Keywords: psychological alienation, psychological security, forced displacement**.**

Introduction:

This study highlights the relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security among Gaza workers who were forcibly relocated to the city province of Jericho because of the Israeli war on the Gaza province, forcing them to live isolated from their families and face extraordinary conditions that negatively affect their psychological health. The study reviews how these forced conditions impact their feelings of alienation and psychological security, emphasizing the importance of psychological security as a basic human need in dealing with difficult circumstances.

To deepen our understanding of the impact of forced conditions on the psychological health of Gaza workers, we turn to the theoretical concepts of social attachment and social support as factors influencing psychological well-being. Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1982) stresses the importance of secure and stable relationships in the development of psychological security, explaining how forced separation and alienation from social and family environments can lead to feelings of isolation and psychological vulnerability. Research on social support (Cohen & Wills, 1985) shows that having a strong social support network can mitigate the negative effects of psychological stress and enhance psychological security, reinforcing the idea that Gaza workers who have been displaced, deported,

and separated from their support networks may face significant challenges in maintaining their psychological well-being. Al-Aqeeli (2004) and Ibrahim (2019) highlight the negative effects of lacking psychological security, ranging from helplessness and loneliness to social detachment.

Recent studies in mental health for migrants and displaced individuals (Dierksen, 2018) provide essential insights into how forced displacement and alienation from homelands affect mental health, showing that alienation may lead to issues such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. These insights underscore the urgent need to provide psychological and social support to individuals affected by conflicts and wars. Recent studies on the psychological effects of wars and conflicts on civilian populations, such as those conducted by Mohamed and Ali (2021), highlight how continuous exposure to conflicts increases feelings of psychological alienation and deteriorates psychological security. Studies related to the impact of conflicts and wars on mental health (Smith & Jones, 2020) emphasize that living under conflict conditions increases the risks of developing psychological alienation and decreases the chances of feeling psychological security. This variance of problems, including anxiety and depression, deepens an individual's sense of alienation from their surroundings (Al-Aqeeli, 2004).

Research conducted by Shakhtar & Singer (2018) and Cohen & Abramson (2020) highlighted the impact of psychological traumas and the role of social networks in enhancing psychological security and reducing feelings of psychological alienation amid conflicts. These studies underscored the importance of employing resilience and coping strategies, focusing on the benefits of self-awareness and mindfulness as explored by Freedman & Colleagues (2022), to improve psychological security. Psychological security, as introduced by Sayed et al. (2000), is fundamental to well-being, emphasizing the essential role of the social environment in providing reassurance and acceptance. Psychological security is considered a crucial element in dealing with life stresses and preventing mental disorders, as reported by Shuqair.(2005)

Previous studies related to psychological alienation and its relationship with psychological security show a statistically significant negative relationship between psychological security levels and psychological alienation. The study by Ishtia and Al-Adwan (2021), as well as the study by Al-Darawsheh and Al-Safasfeh (2020), and the analysis by Al-Azmi (2021), all showed this relationship. A study conducted by Agu and Nwankwo (2018) highlights the significant importance of social relationships and communication with family and friends in enhancing psychological well-being, showing that social integration is positively associated with psychological security, while alienation is associated with negative relationships. Wong et al. (2017) focused on the experience of social alienation as an important factor in the feeling of loneliness among the elderly, pointing out that social alienation deepens feelings of loneliness in this group. Trofimova and Kuzmina (2022) provided indicators of psychological security for personality, emphasizing the importance of a supportive family and professional environment in enhancing psychological security. Khalidi (2014) found a positive relationship between psychological security and decision-making, noting that age and social status (such as marriage) contribute to an increased feeling of psychological security. Moreover, Mahaarcha and Kittisuksathit (2007) suggest that social status may affect feelings of alienation and psychological security. Yasmina's study (2020) did not find differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to age, while Abu Lail's study (2019) showed statistically significant differences in psychological alienation between the educated and the uneducated according to age, favoring the older individuals.

Study Problem:

This study delves into exploring and understanding the relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security among Gaza workers forcibly moved to the province of Jericho city because of the war on Gaza. It focuses on the psychological impact resulting from forced relocation and separation from social and familial networks, leading to extraordinary conditions that exacerbate feelings of alienation and diminish the sense of psychological security. The study aims to deepen the understanding of how these conditions affect the psychological well-being of Gaza workers and seeks to explore the factors influencing the relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security, relying on theoretical frameworks such as social attachment theory and social support studies.

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of psychological alienation and psychological security attributed to demographic variables, such as age, social status, and the number of children among Gaza workers?
2. Are there differences in psychological alienation and psychological security attributed to demographic variables such as age, social status, and the number of children among Gaza workers?
3. Is there a relationship between the level of psychological alienation and psychological security among Gaza workers?

Importance of the Study:

Conducting this study represents a crucial step towards highlighting an urgent humanitarian issue, supporting efforts for intervention and recovery at both individual and collective levels. The study illuminates the profound psychological and social effects of wars and forced displacement on individuals, representing a humanitarian issue that causes attention and support from the international community and humanitarian organizations, providing documented data to guide policymakers and humanitarian organizations in developing and implementing targeted intervention programs. It contributes to raising awareness and understanding among the public about the challenges and life difficulties faced by forcibly displaced individuals, fostering empathy and community support for them.

Study Procedures:

Method and Hypothesis: A descriptive correlational methodology was used in the study, employing two questionnaires specifically designed for this research. The proposed hypothesis is: There are no statistically significant differences at the level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in psychological alienation and psychological security among workers forcibly moved to the province of Jericho city according to the study variables (age, social status, and number of children among Gaza workers).

Population and Sample:

This study was conducted on Gaza workers representing that group of 220 workers who were previously employed within the occupied territories. However, with the escalation of events and the outbreak of war, these workers found themselves forced to leave their places of work and were pushed towards the West Bank. This unfortunate situation rendered them unable to return to their city, Gaza,

leaving them stranded away from their families and children who are living through difficult moments under the bombardment and fear of death.

Participants: This study focused on Gaza workers forcibly moved to the province of Jericho city, considering their diverse demographic characteristics. A purposive sampling method was used. The study included 124 participants; the age distribution of the participants is: 17.7% in the age group from 21 to 30 years, 23.4% in the group from 31 to 40 years, 31.5% in the group from 41 to 50 years, and 27.4% are 51 years and above. In terms of social status, 16.9% of the participants were single, 75.8% were married, and 7.3% were divorced. Regarding the number of children, 28.2% of the participants had no children, 23.4% had 1 to 3 children, and 48.4% had 4 children or more. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of the study sample.

Table 1: Description of the Study Sample's Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Variables	Categories	N	Percentage (%)
Age	21-30 years	22	17.7
	31-40 years	29	23.4
	41-50 years	39	31.5
	51 years and above	34	27.4
Social Status	Single	21	16.9
	Married	94	75.8
	Divorced	9	7.3
Number of Children	None	35	28.2
	1-3	29	23.4
	4 or more	60	48.4

Study Tools

After reviewing the educational literature and previous studies related to the study topic and the scales used in them, the studies of Al-Aqeel (2014) and Madoukh (2016) were utilized in developing the Psychological Alienation Scale, which contained (27) items in its final form. Likewise, the study of Yasmina (2020) was used in developing the Psychological Security Scale, which contained (23) items in its final form. Responses in the study regarding psychological alienation were recorded using a five-point Likert scale, and as a result, response levels were classified as low (from 1 to <2.33), medium (from 2.34 to <3.67), high (from 3.68 to 5). For the use of a three-point Likert scale to measure psychological security, responses were classified as low (from 1 to <1.67), medium (from 1.67 to <2.34), and high (from 2.34 to 3).

Validity and Reliability of the Tools

The validity of the tool was verified by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficient for the questionnaire items compared to the total score of the tool, which showed statistical significance at the level of all items. The reliability of the tool was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha equation, where it reached 0.81 for the Psychological Alienation Scale and 0.74 for the Psychological Security Scale.

Statistical Analysis:

The data processing included the use of arithmetic means and standard deviations to analyze the data collected from the participants. To evaluate the differences and relationships between variables, multiple statistical analyses were conducted, including one-way ANOVA tests and Pearson correlation coefficients. In addition, the reliability of the tools used in the study was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha equation. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software, version 23.

Analysis:

This section presents the statistical methods adopted for analyzing the data collected from 124 workers forcibly moved to the province of Jericho, aiming to examine and evaluate the relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security by considering demographic variables.

Table 2 Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Level of Psychological Alienation and Psychological Security

Variable	SD	M	Score
Psychological Alienation	3.57	.873	High
Psychological Security	1.55	.509	Low

Table 2, we observe that the level of psychological alienation among the workers shows a high arithmetic mean of 3.57, with a standard deviation of 0.873, showing a high level of psychological alienation among these workers. The level of psychological security shows low scores, with an arithmetic mean of 1.55 and a standard deviation of 0.509.

Table (3) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Psychological Alienation and Psychological Security According to Age Variable

Variables	Age Level	N	M	SD	F value	P value
Psychological Alienation	21-30 years	22	2.62	.858	15.377	.000
	31-40 years	29	3.61	.523		
	41-50 years	39	3.73	.760		
	51 years and above	34	3.96	.828		
Psychological Security	21-30 years	22	1.90	.411	13.784	.000
	31-40 years	29	1.77	.486		
	41-50 years	39	1.49	.489		
	51 years and above	34	1.21	.369		

Table 3 reveals that, based on the results of the one-way ANOVA statistical analysis, there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation based on the age variable (F = 15.377, P value < 0.00). The arithmetic means show an increase in the level of psychological alienation with age. The age group 21-30 has a psychological alienation level with an average (M =

2.62, SD = .858), the age group 31-40 with an average (M = 3.61, SD = .523), and the age group 41-50 shows an average (M = 3.73, SD = .760). Meanwhile, the age group 51 and over shows the highest average for psychological alienation (M = 3.96, SD = .828), reflecting increased levels of psychological alienation with age.

Table 3 also reveals that there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological security based on the age variable (F = 13.784, P value < 0.00). The arithmetic means show a decrease in the level of psychological security with age, with the age group 21-30 showing a psychological security level with an average (M = 1.90, SD = .411), the age group 31-40 with an average (M = 1.77, SD = .486), and the age group 41-50 with an average (M = 1.49, SD = .489). Meanwhile, the age group 51 and over shows the lowest level of psychological security (M = 1.21, SD = .369), reflecting a decrease in psychological security with age.

Table (4) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Psychological Alienation and Psychological Security According to Marital Status

Variables	Marital Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Psychological Alienation	Single	21	2.87	.871	9.816	.000
	Married	94	3.74	.827		
	Divorced	9	3.44	.485		
Psychological Security	Single	21	1.98	.381	11.948	.000
	Married	94	1.44	.479		
	Divorced	9	1.71	.544		

Table 4 reveals that, based on the results of the one-way ANOVA statistical analysis, there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation based on marital status (F = 9.816, P value < 0.00). The arithmetic means show differences in levels of psychological alienation among individuals based on their marital status, with single individuals showing a psychological alienation level with an average (M = 2.87, SD = .871), married individuals with an average (M = 3.74, SD = .827), and divorced individuals with an average (M = 3.44, SD = .485). These results show that marital status plays an important role in determining levels of psychological alienation, with the highest levels of alienation observed among married individuals compared to singles singleorced individuals.

The table also reveals that there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological security based on marital status (F = 11.948, P value < 0.00). The data show that single individuals have the highest level of psychological security with an average (M = 1.98, SD = .381), followed by divorced individuals with an average (M = 1.71, SD = .544), and finally, married individuals show the lowest level of psychological security with an average (M = 1.44, SD = .479).

Table (5) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Psychological Alienation and Psychological Security According to the Number of Children

Variables	Number of children	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Psychological Alienation	None	35	3.24	.935	3.807	.025
	1-3	29	3.60	.792		
	4 or more	60	3.74	.833		
Psychological Security	None	35	1.88	.454	13.462	.000
	1-3	29	1.53	.495		
	4 or more	60	1.37	.456		

The one-way ANOVA statistical analysis reveals statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation based on the number of children (F = 3.807, P = .025). The data shows that individuals with no children have an average psychological alienation level of (M = 3.24, SD = .935), those with 1 to 3 children show a slightly higher average (M = 3.60, SD = .792), while individuals with 4 or more children record the highest average (M = 3.74, SD = .833).

These results show a noticeable increase in levels of psychological alienation with an increasing number of children, suggesting the impact of the educational burden and responsibilities associated with caring for more children on individuals' levels of psychological alienation. The one-way ANOVA statistical analysis also reveals statistically significant differences in the level of psychological security based on the number of children (F = 13.462, P < 0.00). The data shows a gradient in psychological security levels related to the number of children, where individuals with no children enjoy the highest level of psychological security (M = 1.88, SD = .454), followed by those with 1 to 3 children with a lower level of psychological security (M = 1.53, SD = .495), and the lowest level of psychological security is recorded for individuals with 4 or more children (M = 1.37, SD = .456).

Table 6 Pearson Correlation Coefficient Between Psychological Alienation and Psychological Security

Correlations	Psychological Alienation	Psychological Security
Pearson Correlation	-.158	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.080	

The Pearson Correlation coefficient between psychological alienation and psychological security is -.158, showing a weak inverse relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as psychological security increases, the level of psychological alienation may slightly decrease, and vice versa, but the strength of this relationship is weak.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that, although there is a weak inverse relationship between psychological alienation and psychological security, this relationship is not statistically significant at the conventional confidence level.

Discussion

The study's findings reveal that most workers experience a high level of psychological alienation and low levels of psychological security. Psychological security, reflecting an individual's sense of safety and stability in their environment, can negatively affect their mental health. The results show clear differences between age groups, with psychological alienation increasing and psychological security decreasing with age, highlighting the unique challenges faced by older adults. These challenges include difficulty adapting to separation from family, loss of social and professional networks, increasing their sense of isolation and helplessness. The study also suggests that the accumulated experiences of the Israeli genocide and ongoing stress exacerbate psychological alienation with age. The decrease in psychological security with age reflects the growing challenges faced by older adults, especially those related to alienation and a lack of resources to cope with stress. The exacerbated alienation because of forced separation deepens feelings of isolation and anxiety, particularly for older individuals who rely on family and friends' support. These results are consistent with Khalidi's study (2014), which found that age contributes to increased psychological security, and Abu Lail's study (2019), which showed differences in psychological alienation favoring older adults, while differing from Yasmina's study (2020) which did not find age-related differences.

The study's results show that marital status significantly affects the level of psychological alienation, with married individuals facing higher levels of alienation compared to single and divorced individuals. This is attributed to the psychological and social pressures resulting from forced separation and the Israeli genocide experienced by Gaza workers. Separation from family leads to an increased burden, especially for married individuals who feel a great responsibility towards their families, and this sense of responsibility and helplessness exacerbates psychological alienation. In contrast, singles and divorced individuals may find easier ways to adapt without the pressures of family responsibility, leading to lower levels of psychological alienation.

Regarding psychological security, single individuals enjoy the highest levels compared to married and divorced individuals, who suffer from lower levels. The single individuals' better ability to adapt to difficult circumstances explains this because of their fewer family responsibilities, enabling them to maintain their psychological stability and seek effective social support. Married individuals face additional psychological stress because of concerns about their families, and this anxiety and sense of responsibility may reduce their psychological security. Divorced individuals face psychological challenges resulting from family changes and adapting to a new situation, affecting their psychological security. These results are consistent with Khalidi's study (2014), which showed that social status, such as marriage, contributes to increased psychological security. Meanwhile, Mahaarcha and Kittisuksathit's study (2007) suggests that social status may affect alienation and psychological security, showing the importance of considering social status when assessing psychological security and alienation in conflict and crisis contexts.

The results reveal that the number of children has a direct and noticeable impact on individuals' psychological alienation and security, with those having children experiencing higher levels of psychological alienation, especially those with one to three children and those with over four children. The increased psychological, social, and economic pressures arising from educational responsibilities and childcare can explain these results, especially under the heavy toll of humanitarian genocide. The stress associated with concerns about the children's future and future expectations can increase parents' feelings of alienation. The research shows that individuals without children enjoy the highest levels of psychological security, underscoring that family obligations and educational pressures

exacerbate psychological stress and negatively affect individuals' resilience in times of crisis. Individuals with four or more children face the lowest levels of psychological security, showing the significant negative impact of increased burdens on psychological security.

The findings revealed a weak inverse relationship between alienation and psychological security, suggesting the psychological challenges resulting from forced separation from families. This confirms that forced separation can deepen feelings of isolation and disconnection, negatively affecting psychological security and increasing alienation. These results are consistent with previous studies such as Ishtia and Al-Adwan (2021), Al-Darawsheh and Al-Safasfeh (2020), and Al-Azmi's analysis (2021), which all showed a significant negative relationship between psychological security and psychological alienation. This highlights the impact of forced separation, emphasizing the need to provide intensive psychological and social support to those affected by these conditions.

conclusions

The study shows high levels of psychological alienation and low levels of psychological security among workers, with negative impacts on mental health, especially among older adults who face difficulties adapting to the challenges resulting from forced displacement and losing social and professional networks. The experiences of genocide and ongoing stress exacerbate this alienation. Marital status and the number of children have a significant impact on the levels of alienation and psychological security.

Preferences

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