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The Impact of Asylum on Psychological Alienation: An Analytical Study from the Perspective of Syrian Refugee Students in Jordan

Atallah S. Al Sarhan , Omar A. Al-Adamat 

Abstract

Background/Objective. This study examines the phenomenon of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate. It explores the impact of variables such as gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income. Psychological alienation is a significant concern for refugee students due to their displacement and the challenges of adaptation. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective educational and psychological support programs.

Materials/methods. The study utilized a quantitative approach, employing a psychological alienation scale to measure students' levels of alienation. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and post-hoc tests were conducted to analyze the differences based on demographic and socioeconomic variables. The sample consisted of Syrian refugee students in the Al-Mafraq Governorate.

Results. The findings indicate that the phenomenon of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate is generally low, with a moderate sense of alienation in certain dimensions, such as loss of belonging and normlessness. No significant differences were found based on gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, or family size. However, family income was a significant factor, with students from lower-income families experiencing higher levels of psychological alienation.

Conclusion. The study highlights the role of economic conditions in shaping psychological alienation among refugee students, emphasizing the need for financial and psychological support programs. The results suggest that fostering social integration, providing mental health resources, and improving financial stability can help mitigate feelings of alienation and enhance student well-being.

1. Introduction

The process of seeking asylum is a significant transformation in individuals' lives, as they are forced to leave their homes and families and integrate into an unknown new environment. This radical change is accompanied by feelings of loss, sadness, and uncertainty about the future, leading to increased levels of psychological and social disorders. The situation is exacerbated by the psychological trauma that may stem from their daily experiences of war and displacement and the lack of psychological support in the asylum environment. These cumulative factors lead to an intensification of psychological alienation among Syrian students and complicate the process of adapting to the new situation, necessitating effective interventions to mitigate these negative effects and provide the essential psychological and social support they need.

The Arab region has witnessed many armed conflicts and wars due to political and security crises, and Syria was one of the areas where wars led to the displacement of millions of Syrian citizens from their country. This resulted in an increase in general discontent among them, which in turn led to a massive refugee movement, with Syrians scattered across most countries in the world. A large number of them sought refuge in neighboring countries to save their lives, and Jordan was one of these countries (Al-Asaad, 2020).

The issue of refugees in the world is among the most complex challenges facing the international community, as wars have serious repercussions and extremely dire consequences. They result in human losses that are not limited to the dead, wounded, and disabled but extend to include refugees, displaced persons, those expelled from their homes, and those deprived of the right to return to their homeland (Al-Shayb, 2017). Refugees suffer greatly, both physically and psychologically, as a result of their direct exposure to conflict, destruction, and violence. Additionally, leaving their countries and moving to other places outside their homeland causes them to withdraw, isolate themselves, and adopt negative ideas that distort their reality, leading them to embrace irrational and distorted beliefs (Ao et al., 2016).

The second-highest number of refugees in the world is found in Jordan, a nation of 10 million people with scarce resources and a difficult economic climate. Its strategic location in the Middle East, along with its political stability and safety, makes it a desirable place to seek refuge, especially considering that it is surrounded by an area that is often rife with political unrest (Awamleh & Dorai, 2023).

Jordan hosts a large number of Syrian refugees, some of whom arrived during the early stages of the bloody conflict in Syria. After more than eight years of the Syrian conflict, the number of Syrian refugees in Jordan has reached 1.36 million, with 90% living outside refugee camps and 10% in refugee camps. The number of registered Syrian refugees with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has reached approximately 673,000 refugees. In addition to these refugees, Jordan currently hosts around 86,000 refugees of other nationalities (Mustafa & Al-Mawadiah, 2023).

Among the problems faced by Syrian refugees are psychological issues manifested in anxiety and psychological alienation. It is worth noting here that every person feels natural anxiety in situations of frustration, conflict, and threat. It is a useful feeling that makes a person defend themselves and protect their life from danger. For example, a mother who feels anxious when her child falls ill is a natural feeling because it is a reaction to a real danger, which indicates a disturbance in mental health or a state of imbalance (Rababa & Smadi, 2020).

Many international and local organizations have been providing various forms of material, social, and psychological support since the beginning of the refugee crisis. Despite all these efforts, many problems and maladaptive behaviors have emerged and spread within refugee communities (Rababa

& Smadi, 2020). Also, the changes and complexities of contemporary life have affected all aspects of human psychological and social life, causing individuals to experience a state of psychological instability and a relative disconnection from themselves and the society they live in more than ever before. These changes, which usually impact an individual's self-identity, result in negative outcomes affecting mental health, the most prominent of which is a sense of alienation due to their significant inclination towards material progress, which is advancing at a tremendous rate, and moral progress, which is moving at a slow pace (House, 2001).

The term "alienation" is derived from the Latin word (*Alienatus*), which means "the alienated." Many social, psychological, philosophical, and historical perspectives have addressed the concept of alienation, and the concept of alienation has been used in various contexts. For example, Marx primarily focused on the concept of alienation within the economic system (Watt, 2000). Previous studies (Kelly & Johnston, 2001; Pantoja & Segura, 2003; Shantz et al., 2014) have shown that the concept of alienation has been addressed in formal organizations, family life, work context, medical context, political context, and religious context. In general, alienation is defined as a state of separation or distance from others, which leads to a feeling of isolation and loneliness for the individual (Railton, 2013).

Alienation is considered a cultural, educational, and psychological problem. Cultural conflict is merely a struggle between values and customs. The new generation of students rejects the values, beliefs, and network of relationships that may be imposed by the family or the university as educational institutions. Psychological alienation manifests through disturbed behaviors such as social withdrawal, lack of participation in social responsibility, self-centeredness (Cliver & Lioman, 2018), and isolation within a circle of personal goals and interests. It includes several psychological and physical disorders, where the unity of personality is weakened and exhausted due to the inability to adapt to society psychologically and the absence of a sense of cohesion (Daniel, 2018; Brown et al., 2003).

Anxiety, frustration, and self-incompatibility are triggered by psychological alienation, which is an expression of human psychological pain. Individual development-related psychological factors, as well as other social factors, can lead to psychological alienation. Self-alienation is thought to be the most prevalent issue that Syrian refugee students face, and UNICEF and other humanitarian organizations are becoming concerned about the psychological and physical health of students in Syrian refugee camps. In Syria, students are separated from their families, and the refugee camp does not provide the best environment for them to continue developing and forming their personalities. Living in a refugee camp has altered their family's surroundings and customs. Anxiety about family members who have been relocated to other camps abroad or who are still in Syria and may have been tortured or killed as a result of terrorism in their nation can all lead to psychological alienation. Their psychological equilibrium is upset when they are abruptly and forcibly removed from a location that symbolizes their memories and privacy (Alhamad, 2021).

Psychological alienation consists of a set of dimensions, including: First: Isolation: This refers to the individual's feeling of loneliness and lack of responsibility towards the society in which they live. Secondly, Helplessness refers to the individual's loss of feeling towards the situations and events surrounding them and the loss of their value, significance, and importance. Third: Rebellion; it represents the individual's feeling of rejection and pessimism towards the people surrounding them. Fourth: Anomie, which reflects the individual's feeling of the absence of moral standards for a single subject. Fifth: Absurdity, which represents the individual's failure to make any predictions about the events they will perform in the future (Al Badarneh et al., 2023; López, 2019).

The definitions of the concept of psychological alienation are numerous, including what Mayer et al. (2006) define as the conflict between the individual and their surrounding environment, where

values of non-belonging, indifference, and resentment towards prevailing social and cultural values are embodied. Additionally, (Marchand and Hock, 2008) define psychological alienation as a feeling that affects the individual, causing a loss of belonging and trust in social norms, which places them under psychological pressure, exposing them to loneliness and breakdown.

Various theoretical frameworks have considered the notion of psychological alienation throughout the history of the discipline, perhaps most prominently that of Kenneth Keniston. His focus in the early 1960s was on the experience of alienation in American youth. However, he claimed that alienation manifests differently depending on the cultural, social, and political frameworks of a given society. As part of Keniston's analysis of the alienated individual, he posited that psychological alienation is regularly characterized by anger, hopelessness, social miscommunication, anxiety, psychological discomfort, poor social skills, and a general rejection of the values most people in society would normally generally hold (Baker, 2007).

Erich Fromm provided a complementary approach, focusing on personality types that represent alienation stemming from his broader theory of personality development. Fromm expressed that personality is influenced by the society in which one exists. He maintains that people are born with intrinsic motivation that directs their needs and goals; however, they often face obstacles in society that restrict the realization of these needs. In this opposition, individuals may succumb to the pressures to abandon some of their world goals in exchange for a sense of belonging, which may affect their individuality and contribute to a sense of alienation (Caplan, 2004). Research has been done on refugee mental health and the experience of alienation; however, there is little research focused on the experience of psychological alienation, specifically among Syrian refugee students living in Jordan. This study intends to broaden the scope of this research area by exploring facets of alienation among Syrian students and evaluating the efficacy of the interventions currently provided to them. This research hopes to inform progressive support strategies aimed at improving psychological resilience and social integration among Syrian students.

The study specifically determines the following research questions:

1. What is the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate?
2. Are there statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate attributed to the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income?

The theoretical significance of this research is to increase knowledge about displacement and conflict's impact on the psychological and social well-being of Syrian students living in Jordan. The research also emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the role alienation plays in their mental health and the need to implement supportive systems. The practical significance will be the ability to use the study's results to recommend programs and actions that can mitigate the negative influences of psychological alienation for Syrian refugee youth in Jordanian schools. The study will also serve to educate parents about positive socialization practices to encourage healthy interaction with their children in ways that reduce psychological alienation and the opportunity to respond in maladaptive ways.

2. Literature Review

A refugee is any person who has left their original town and is unable or incapable of returning due to real and justified fears resulting from serious random threats to life, physical safety, or freedom or fleeing from events that disturb the scientific order in all its forms (GMG, 2010). On the other hand, Psychological Alienation is the individual's feeling of helplessness, isolation, poor adjustment, lack of belonging to society, and the rejection of social values and norms. A

psychologically secure person feels that their needs are met and that the basic components of their life are not at risk. A psychologically secure person is in a state of balance or security (Schluz, 2011).

Numerous studies have addressed psychological alienation, including the study of Al-Aqeel (2014), which aimed to identify the phenomenon of psychological alienation among a sample of Syrian refugees in Jordan. The researcher used the descriptive survey method and the psychological alienation scale on a sample consisting of 251 refugees. The results indicated a moderate level of psychological alienation among the Syrian refugees. The results indicated that the level of alienation was higher among those with education below secondary compared to those with a diploma, and there was a high level of alienation among those with postgraduate studies compared to those with bachelor's degrees or lower. The results also indicated differences between males and females on the alienation scale in favor of females, meaning that the degree of alienation among females was higher than that among males.

The study of Shammout (2016) aimed to reveal the degree of psychological alienation among a sample of Syrian refugee students in Jordan. The study sample consisted of 378 male and female students from the eighth and ninth grades residing in the Al-Mreijeb and Al-Mukhayzin camps in the Az-Zarqa Governorate of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The researchers used the psychological alienation scale. The study results showed that the level of alienation among Syrian refugee students was below average, and there were statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation among Syrian refugee students according to the gender variable, favoring females. Additionally, there were statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation according to the place of residence variable (city, camp), favoring students residing in cities.

The study of Shabir and Abdul Rahim (2018) aimed to identify psychological alienation among a sample of refugees in Palestine. The sample consisted of (992) refugees in Gaza and Lebanon. The researchers applied the alienation scale they developed. The study found a low level of alienation among the sample as a whole, and no differences in the level of psychological alienation were attributed to the variables of gender and educational level.

The study of Rababa and Smadi (2020) aimed to identify the level of psychological alienation among a sample of Syrian refugee high school girls in Jordan and its relationship with the variables of family size and duration of asylum. The study sample consisted of (600) female students, and the psychological alienation scale developed by the researchers was applied to them. The study concluded that the level of psychological alienation among the female students was moderate, and there were no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the variables of family size and duration of asylum.

El-Nammi and Zammouchi (2021) conducted a study aimed at identifying the level of psychological alienation among them in the schools of the Gaza Strip. The study sample consisted of (383) male and female secondary school students in Gaza, and the researcher used the adolescent psychological alienation scale. The study concluded that the level of psychological alienation among secondary school students was high, and there were differences in the average scores of secondary school students in psychological alienation attributed to gender, favoring males.

Al Badarneh et al. (2023) conducted a study aimed at revealing the level of psychological alienation and its relationship with the spread of irrational ideas among a sample of Syrian students. The study sample consisted of 452 male and female students and the measures of psychological alienation and irrational thoughts were used. The study results showed that the level of psychological alienation and irrational thoughts among students was moderate, and there was a positive correlation between psychological alienation and irrational thoughts among the study sample. The study results also indicated statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to gender, favoring males.

It is evident from reviewing the results of previous studies that there is a clear variation between these studies in terms of objectives or the nature of the sample, which they reached concerning the variables of the current study. As for the current study, it distinguished itself from other previous studies by being the first Arab study, to the researchers' knowledge, which aimed to reveal the level of psychological alienation among Syrian refugee students in light of the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income.

Seeking asylum can itself be a distressing process, adding to the feelings of psychological alienation. Refugees are often faced with forced displacement, separation from their homeland, and uncertainty regarding legal status and other futures. These experiences can generate complications to their identity or sense of belonging, resulting in isolation, helplessness, and emotional disconnection. Studies have indicated that asylum seekers typically experience bureaucratic barriers, social marginalization, and economic difficulty, all of which amplify feelings of alienation (Silove, 2013). Furthermore, refugees may also face cultural and linguistic challenges, discrimination, and limited access to psychological support services that increase feelings of disconnection and alienation in the process of integrating into their host society (Miller & Rasmussen, 2017).

Moreover, the asylum process can cause chronic psychological stress, as refugees experience long waiting times to obtain legal status, fear deportation, and cannot find sustainable housing and employment. All of these can produce negative thoughts, a sense of helplessness, and loss of agency, which are all indicators of psychological alienation (Bhugra & Becker, 2005). Studies have shown that refugees in protracted asylum situations often experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, and conflict with their identity as they reconsider their previous experience and discover an ambiguous present and future (Laban et al., 2005). Therefore, alienation is not simply an effect of displacement but a continuous and changing process that is rooted in the experience of asylum. This highlights the necessity for structured mental health interventions that focus on alienation as an aspect of the refugee experience of adaptation and integration.

3. Methodology

The descriptive method was used in this research, which is acceptable for purposefully exploring associations between variables without manipulating them. With the use of this method, the research aims to obtain a broad and deep understanding of the psychological experiences of refugee students through objective and orderly analysis of the data obtained. The research followed a systematic process for accuracy and reliability. The study instrument was developed in the first instance. Its validation and reliability were assessed by expert review and administered to a pilot sample. Then, the study population was identified based on statistics issued by the Educational Planning Department in the Directorate of Education for the North Western Badia District, and a representative sample was chosen. After the study instrument was distributed remotely (using Google Forms) to the selected participants, the researchers processed the data collected to allow for statistical analysis. Finally, the researchers extracted the results, analyzed and discussed the results in response to the questions posed in the research, and made appropriate conclusions and recommendations.

The study included a sample of 215 male and female students drawn from a total population of 563 Syrian refugee students enrolled in evening shift schools in the North West Badia District, Mafraq Governorate. Since it was physically infeasible to sample an entire population directly, the researchers used a convenience sampling method. The students were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study and their availability during the period of data collection. No restrictions were placed on the grade level of students; all participants needed to be enrolled as refugee students. All participants completed an informed consent form prior to participation in

accordance with ethical guidelines. Table 1 lists the distribution of the study sample members according to their variables.

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages by Study Variables

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage %
Sex	Male	131	60.9
	Female	84	39.1
Parental Presence	Live with your parents	140	65.1
	Live with one of them	75	34.9
Duration of Asylum	1 to 5 years	114	53.0
	More than 5 years	101	47.0
Family Size	1-4 individuals	76	35.3
	5-7 individuals	75	34.9
	8 people and above	64	29.8
Family Income	100-300 JD	69	32.1
	301-500 JD	100	46.5
	More than 500 JD	46	21.4
	Total	215	100.0

Source: Directorate of Education for the Northwestern Badia District, Al-Mafraq Governorate, Jordan, 2024.

In the current study, the Psychological Alienation Scale developed by (Rababa and Smadi, 2020) was used. The scale, in its original form, consists of (40) paragraphs distributed across four dimensions: the dimension of loss of sense of belonging, which is allocated (10 Loss of sense of belonging); the dimension of non-compliance with standards, which is allocated (10 Normlessness); the dimension of helplessness, which is allocated (10 Powerlessness); and the dimension of loss of meaning, which is allocated (10 Meaninglessness). Responses to the scale items are given using a five-point Likert scale, where a weight of (1) is assigned to "strongly disagree" and a weight of (5) is assigned to "strongly agree."

To ensure content validity, the psychological alienation scale was reviewed by nine faculty members at Al al-Bayt University, specializing in educational psychology, measurement and evaluation, and political science. The experts evaluated the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of each item to its corresponding dimension. An agreement rate of 80% among the reviewers was set as the criterion for retaining or modifying the items. Based on their feedback, two items were removed from the "loss of sense of belonging" dimension, one item from the "powerlessness" dimension, and one item from the "meaninglessness" dimension. Additionally, several items were linguistically refined to improve clarity and precision. After these modifications, the final version of the scale comprised 36 items distributed across four dimensions.

In order to assess construct validity, correlation coefficients were calculated between each item and its corresponding dimension, as well as with the total scale. A pilot study was performed on 42 male and female students who were not part of the sample for the main study. Using the data from the 42 students, we found that the correlation coefficients between each item and the total scale scores ranged from 0.37 to 0.83, and the correlations between each item and its dimension ranged from 0.36 to 0.86. All of these correlations were significant. These results suggest that each item

measured the intended construct and demonstrates that the structural validity of the scale is intact. Lastly, we also evaluated the correlation coefficients between the 4 dimensions themselves, as well as between the dimensions and the total scale, which ranged from 0.71 to 0.94, and all were significant. The totality of this evidence provides further support for the scale's validity.

The reliability of the psychological alienation scale was examined using two methods:

(i) Test-Retest Reliability: The scale was administered to a separate group of 42 students and then re-administered after two weeks. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated between the two administrations, yielding values ranging from 0.80 to 0.89 across the dimensions and the total score, indicating high temporal stability.

(ii) Internal Consistency (Cronbach's Alpha): It was used to measure the internal consistency of the scale; the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed. The results indicate a high reliability of the scale for each dimension (range: 0.77 – 0.85). The overall Cronbach's alpha value for the scale was 0.85, indicating the scale's strong internal consistency.

These results demonstrate that the psychological alienation scale is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing psychological alienation among Syrian refugee students.

In this study, an assortment of appropriate statistical techniques was used to analyze the data that had been gathered. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to describe the overall levels of psychological alienation of the Syrian refugee students. The assessment of differences in demographic information (gender, parental presence, time housed in asylum, family size, household income) was utilized using a five-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to see the effect of the multiple independent variables to determine if a difference existed between the groups. When any significant results were observed, a post-hoc comparison (Scheffé method) was used to investigate further differences in group means. In order to verify that statistical analyses were carried out accurately and at a reliable level, all analyses were conducted using SPSS software.

4. Results

To answer the first question, "What is the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate?" the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate were extracted as listed in Table 2.

Table 2. The Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of Psychological Alienation among Syrian Refugee Students Arranged in Descending Order According to the Means

Rank	No.	Field	Mean	S.D.	Level
1.	1.	Loss of sense of belonging	2.75	.665	Medium
2.	2.	Normlessness	2.66	.500	Medium
3.	3.	Powerlessness	1.95	.393	Low
4.	4.	Meaninglessness	1.92	.570	Low
		Psychological Alienation Scale	2.30	.312	Low

Table 2 indicates that the arithmetic means ranged between 1.92 and 2.75, with the dimension of loss of sense of belonging ranking first with the highest arithmetic mean of 2.75 at a moderate level. In contrast, the dimension of incapacity ranked last with an arithmetic mean of 1.92 at a low level. The overall arithmetic mean of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate was 2.30 at a low level.

To answer the second question "Are there statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate attributed to the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income?", the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate to the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income. Table 3 illustrates this.

Table 3. The Means and Standard Deviations of the Level of Psychological Alienation from the Perspective of Syrian Refugee Students in Al-Mafraq Governorate to the Variables of Gender, Parental Presence, Duration of Asylum, Family Size, and Family Income

Variables	Categories	Mean	S.D.	Number
Gender	Male	2.45	.298	131
	Female	2.45	.335	84
Parental presence	Live with your parents	2.44	.258	140
	Live with one of them	2.46	.396	75
Duration of Asylum	From 1 to 5 years	2.44	.305	114
	More than 5 years	2.45	.321	101
Family Size	1-4 individuals	2.43	.293	76
	5-7 individuals	2.47	.351	75
	8 and above	2.44	.288	64
Family Income	100-300 JD	2.54	.346	69
	301-500 JD	2.42	.283	100
	More than 500 JD	2.37	.293	46

Table 3 indicates an apparent variation in the means and standard deviations of the level of psychological alienation from the perspective of Syrian refugee students in Al-Mafraq Governorate, with respect to the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, family size, and family income. A five-way ANOVA was used to indicate the significance of the statistical differences between the means, and Table 4 illustrates this.

Table 4. Five-way ANOVA of the Effect of Gender, Parental Presence, Duration of Asylum, Family Size, and Family Income on the Level of Psychological Alienation

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Squares	F	Statistical Significance
Gender	0.001	1	0.001	0.006	0.940
Parental Presence	0.005	1	0.005	0.051	0.822
Duration of Asylum	0.033	1	0.033	0.346	0.557
Family Size	0.049	2	0.025	0.258	0.773
Family Income	0.909	2	0.455	4.743	0.010
Mistake	19.84	207	0.096		
Total	20.844	214			

It is evident from Table 4 that the following: (i) The absence of statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the effect of gender, where the F value was 0.006 and the statistical significance was 0.940. (ii) The absence of statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the parental presence, where the F value was 0.051 and the statistical significance was 0.822. (iii) The absence of statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the effect of the duration of asylum, where the F value was 0.346 and the statistical significance was 0.557. (iv) The absence of statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the effect of family size, where the F value was 0.258 and the statistical significance was 0.773. (v) The presence of statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the effect of family income, where the F value was 4.743, and the statistical significance was 0.010. To illustrate the statistically significant pairwise differences between the arithmetic means, post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffé method were employed, as listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Post-hoc Comparisons Using the Scheffé Method for the Effect of Family Income on the Level of Psychological Alienation

Family Income	Mean	100-300	301-500	More than 500
100-300 JD	2.54			
301-500 JD	2.42	.12		
More than 500 JD	2.37	.16*	.05	

**Significant at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).*

It is evident from Table 5 that there are statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between (100-300) JD and more than (500) dinars, with the differences favoring (100-300) JD.

5. Discussion

Regarding the results of the first question, the researchers may attribute this result in light of the social, psychological, and economic changes that Syrian refugee students experience due to their transition from one society to another and the resulting feelings of alienation. However, the availability of numerous centers and committees dedicated to Syrian refugee students and the efforts to integrate them into the school community and society, in general, may have contributed to reducing their sense of alienation.

These results can be explained by the fact that social integration plays an important role in reducing psychological alienation, as it helps them adapt to the new environment. Additionally, the educational and training opportunities available to Syrian refugee students can contribute to improving their psychological levels and building their future. The sense of identity and familiarity with the new culture can also help reduce the feelings of psychological alienation they may experience. Additionally, the psychological and health support available to these students can play a vital role in enhancing their mental health and alleviating the pressures they may face, thereby reducing their sense of psychological alienation.

The result of this study is consistent with the findings of the studies of Al Badarneh et al. (2023) and Rababa and Smadi (2020), which indicated that the level of psychological alienation among female students was moderate.

The result of this study differs from the result of the study of Shammout (2016), which indicated that the level of alienation among refugee students was below average. The result of this study differs from the result of the study of Shabir and Abdul Rahim (2018), which indicated a decrease in the level of alienation among the sample as a whole. The result of this study differs from the result of the study

of El-Nammi and Zammouchi (2021), which indicated that the level of psychological alienation among the study sample was high.

The results of the second question also showed no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation among Syrian refugee students attributed to the variables of gender, parental presence, duration of asylum, and family size. The researchers attribute this result to the difficult and similar social, economic, and political conditions, as well as the rapid changes in events faced by refugee students. They are able to adapt to these conditions and build a personality that does not suffer from psychological alienation and develop a personality that enjoys a fair amount of confidence, in addition to their ability to form friendships that match their intellectual, economic, and social levels, and to engage in the school environment which serves as an outlet for them, reducing the feeling of alienation. Thus, their psychological characteristics are somewhat similar regardless of these variables.

The result of this study is consistent with the findings of the study of Al-Aqeel (2014) and (Shammout, 2016), which indicated the presence of differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the gender variable in favor of females. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of the study of Rababa and Smadi (2020), which indicated that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the variables of family size and duration of asylum. The result of this study is consistent with the result of the study of Shabir and Abdul Rahim (2018), which indicated the existence of differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the variable of gender.

The result of this study differs from the findings of the study of Al Badarneh et al. (2023) and El-Nammi and Zammouchi (2021), which indicated the presence of statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the gender variable in favor of males.

The results of the second question showed statistically significant differences in the level of psychological alienation attributed to the variable of family income level, favoring the range of 100-300 dinars. The researchers attribute this result to the fact that low-income families may face greater challenges in providing the necessary psychological and social support to their members, which can increase the level of psychological alienation. Additionally, low-income families may have limited social support networks, making them more susceptible to social isolation and feelings of loneliness. This can contribute to increased feelings of psychological alienation and difficult living conditions. Furthermore, low-income families may be subjected to discrimination and social injustice, which can negatively affect self-esteem and increase feelings of alienation and isolation.

The duration of asylum, gender, and parental presence significantly influence psychological alienation among Syrian refugee students. A longer asylum period may aid adaptation but can also deepen feelings of instability. Gender differences shape experiences, with female students potentially facing cultural barriers and males external pressures. Parental presence acts as a protective factor, offering stability, while its absence may heighten loneliness and alienation. Understanding these factors is crucial for effective support and intervention.

The long-term effects of psychological alienation can lead to anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, affecting emotional well-being. It can also hinder social connections, lead to isolation, and reduce academic performance due to disengagement. Early intervention is key to preventing these lasting challenges.

6. Conclusion

This research highlights the psychological alienation faced by Syrian refugee students and shows that their level of alienation is moderate overall. Although there are components that help to mitigate alienation, including social integration, receiving an education, and having access to psychological

support, there are some overall factors, especially family income, that complicate students' psychological well-being. The data suggests that there is a need for inclusive environments and the resources necessary to support refugee students as they engage and resettle in education and the community. Programs developed in the community should see the long-term psychological effects of alienation as a priority, which would foster positive mental health outcomes.

The scope of this research has significant implications for educators, policy-makers, and mental health professionals. For educators, the results suggest the vital need to create inclusive and supportive environments in classrooms that enable social connection and emotional safety. Policy-makers can utilize these findings to develop and implement policies that support equitable access to quality education, community integration, and service access to culturally responsive mental health programs for refugee populations. Lastly, mental health professionals may be informed to develop interventions that specifically address the unique complexities that refugee students face due to their social, economic, and cultural transitions. Stakeholders and students can be more intentional in their methods to better understand the contributing factors of psychological alienation, and educators, policy-makers, and mental health professionals can work together in support of the mental health and academic success of Syrian refugee students.

While the study has made worthwhile contributions, it also has limitations. The study sample consisted of students ($n = 215$) comprising male and female Syrian refugee students attending evening shift schools affiliated with the Directorate of Education in the North West Badia District of Al-Mafraq Governorate during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Hence, the generalizability of the findings is constrained due to the sample size, the unique population, the trustworthiness and authenticity of the instruments, and possibly due to inconsistencies in responses or understanding of the research tools.

7. Suggestions

Based on the results of the study, the researchers suggest aiming to enhance the families' financial conditions since doing so would actually aid in decreasing the degree of psychological alienation. Another practical suggestion is to provide families with the best coping strategies for psychological alienation, which again would help, in general, with their mental health. This study also suggests that future research can examine psychological alienation in relation to other variables, such as psychological well-being and psychological flourishing, to gain a further understanding of how refugee student mental health can be fostered to de-stigmatize refugee students. This step is important because these steps will engrain the further reduction of alienation and increased well-being among refugee students.

Declarations

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