

El flujo psicológico entre los profesionales de orientación y asesoramiento escolar y profesional: un estudio descriptivo de una muestra de la provincia de El Oued

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Recibido: 01/04/2026 · Aceptado: 02/08/2026 · Publicado: 04/10/2026

Resumen

El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo determinar el nivel de flujo psicológico entre los profesionales de orientación y asesoramiento escolar y profesional de la provincia de El Oued, así como examinar la existencia de diferencias en dicho nivel en función de la especialidad académica. Se adoptó un enfoque descriptivo y se trabajó con una muestra de 70 orientadores de ambos sexos, seleccionados mediante un procedimiento censal. Se aplicó la escala de flujo psicológico de Jackson y Marsh (Jackson & Marsh, 1996).

Los resultados revelaron un nivel elevado de flujo psicológico entre los participantes. Asimismo, no se encontraron diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre sus puntuaciones medias en función de la especialidad académica. El estudio recomendó organizar cursos y programas destinados a desarrollar el flujo psicológico y promover la cultura de la psicología positiva entre los profesionales de la orientación.

Introduction:

Psychology is no longer limited to the study of disorders and psychological problems; a modern movement known as "Positive Psychology" has emerged. This field focuses on the positive aspects of the human experience and offers optimal ways to help individuals cultivate positive traits, ultimately achieving the highest levels of mental health and overall quality of life.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (1998) emphasized that positive psychology is not the study of pathology, resignation, or psychological breakdown; rather, it is the study of human strengths, virtues, and values.

Psychological Flow among School and Vocational Guidance and Counseling Counselors - A Descriptive Study on a Sample of School and Vocational Guidance and Counseling Counselors in El Oued Province.

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Received: 01/04/2026; Accepted: 02/08/2026; Published: 04/10/2026

Abstract:

The current study aimed to identify the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling counselors in the state of El Oued and to reveal whether there are differences in the level of psychological flow among the sample members due to the academic specialization variable. The study followed the descriptive approach, and the sample consisted of (70) male and female counselors. They were selected using a comprehensive survey method, and the psychological flow scale of Jackson and Marsh (Jackson & Marsh, 1996) was applied. The results showed a high level of psychological flow among the sample members. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the average scores of the sample members in... The level of psychological flow is due to the variable of academic specialization. The study recommended the necessity of establishing courses and programs to develop psychological flow, and spreading the culture of positive psychology among guidance counselors.

Furthermore, it seeks to maximize a skill possessed by all individuals: the drive to strive toward a goal. This striving fosters positive human traits and encourages their appropriate application.

"Psychological flow" is a modern concept within positive psychology aimed at enhancing the positive aspects of an individual's personality. It represents a positive phenomenon—a subjective experience that occurs when individuals lose self-awareness while deeply engaged in contemplation and problem-solving. They become fully immersed in the tasks associated with these challenges, accompanied by a sense of euphoria and joy. Through this state, they experience the delight of living and discover life's meaning, rendering their lives purposeful and truly worth living (Gharib, 1992, p. 402). School guidance and counseling counselors are clearly pivotal to the advancement of the school guidance and counseling process; indeed, they are central to this process, playing a crucial role in helping students confront the challenges they encounter during their academic journey and enabling them to shape their future plans.

It is within this context that the present study aims to assess the level of psychological flow experienced by school guidance and counseling counselors in El Oued Province.

1- The Research Problem:

In the modern era, attention to guidance and counseling has become an imperative driven by various considerations—foremost among them the individual's right to chart their own future. Consequently, school guidance services serve as a vital, integral component of the educational process, contributing to the holistic development of the student's personality. From this perspective, school guidance is an educational practice that aligns and integrates with the broader goals of education and instruction; it seeks to help students achieve psychological and academic adjustment—taking into account their aptitudes, abilities, aspirations, and socio-economic context—thereby empowering them to build a personal plan and make informed academic and career choices that serve both individual and collective goals.

Accordingly, Algeria has attached great importance to guidance within the educational process, incorporating it into all official texts and charters governing the education and training sector since independence. This commitment was enshrined in the 1976 Ordinance on educational reform, which mandated the widespread appointment of guidance counselors—recognizing their pivotal role in the guidance process—and assigned a specific counselor to each institution (middle or secondary school). This emphasis was further reinforced following the education sector's integration of beneficiaries from the Professional Integration Assistance and Social Integration schemes for degree holders, as stipulated by Executive Decree No. 19-336 dated December 9, 2019.

A review of the texts and circulars defining the duties and roles of the school and vocational guidance counselor—most notably Ministerial Circular No. 1051 dated June 23, 2018—reveals that their tasks can be categorized into four fundamental areas:

- School information.
- School guidance.
- School counseling.
- Evaluation and follow-up. For guidance counselors to perform these activities optimally, stay abreast of new developments in their field, enhance their professional competencies, and—consequently—elevate their performance within educational institutions, they must possess good mental health. Psychological flow is a manifestation of positive mental health and well-being, yielding positive outcomes such as a sense of happiness.

It represents a balance between an individual's perception of their skills and the difficulty of the task at hand, fostering a sense of control. This state enhances the work environment, boosts achievement effectiveness, promotes psychological stability, and empowers the individual to contribute more creatively. Al-Dhahiri and Al-Ghanami (2023) underscored this point regarding the importance of psychological flow in the workplace, noting that "employees who experience psychological flow devote special attention to their work, focusing their efforts on completing their tasks and striving to contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals."

Thus, it can be stated that "psychological flow"—as previously outlined—represents a positive personality trait; it enhances productivity and work efficiency while alleviating psychological stress. This is precisely what prompted us to examine psychological flow, particularly in the context of the professional challenges, pressures, and difficulties faced by school guidance counselors. Numerous studies have documented these issues—such as the study by Bouznad (2017), which concluded that school guidance in Algeria continues to struggle with various operational and thematic hurdles. These difficulties span the areas of information and communication, guidance and counseling, support and accompaniment, and follow-up and evaluation. Furthermore, the reforms implemented have proven insufficient or ineffective in resolving these systemic problems. This situation impacts the guidance counselor's intervention effectiveness and complicates the management of their diverse assigned duties—ranging from school information dissemination, assessment, guidance, support, and follow-up to training and research. Given the scope of these responsibilities, it is difficult for a counselor to adequately cover even a single activity, let alone manage the full spectrum of tasks. Studies by Oulad Haddar (2020) and Ben Arbia (2020) concluded that school guidance and counseling counselors play a significant role in the educational process, yet they face various difficulties and obstacles in their professional careers. Similarly, Chohra and Mansour (2022) found that school and vocational guidance counselors encounter numerous impediments—most notably personal obstacles, those related to the counseling environment, obstacles involving other parties in the educational process, issues concerning the school principal, and challenges linked to the socio-cultural environment. These findings align with those of Ben Hamed (2024).

Based on the foregoing, it can be stated that psychological flow helps individuals engage in life activities and overcome challenges; employees who experience psychological flow devote special attention to their work and focus their efforts on completing their tasks to contribute to the organization's goals, thereby underscoring the importance of the state of flow within the work environment (Al-Dhahiri & Al-Ghannami, 2023).

The problem addressed in the current study emerged from our own experience as school and vocational guidance counselors; we observed that this profession entails significant pressure for the counselor, particularly at the middle school level, where the role is relatively new. However, we have observed that while some individuals demonstrate an acceptable level of performance in their duties, others feel they have reached a state of psychological burnout. This highlights the problem addressed by the current study, which aims to gain a deeper understanding of school and vocational guidance counselors and the factors influencing them. Like professionals in other fields, they encounter various work-related challenges; however, because they deal with human cases requiring continuous care, they face unique issues not experienced by their counterparts in other professions.

Accordingly, the study's problem can be summarized by the following questions:

1- Are there statistically significant differences between the mean psychological flow scores of school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothetical mean?

2- Are there statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors based on the variable of academic specialization (Psychology, Educational Sciences, or Sociology)?

1- Study Hypotheses:

In light of the problem defined by the aforementioned questions, hypotheses have been formulated as tentative answers. These aim to cover key aspects of the study and anticipate the facts that may emerge from the field research. The hypotheses are as follows:

- First Hypothesis: There are statistically significant differences between the mean psychological flow scores of school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothetical mean. - Second hypothesis: There are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling counselors attributable to the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, Sociology).

1- Significance of the Study:

First: Theoretical Significance:

The theoretical significance of the research is outlined as follows:

- Shedding light on "psychological flow"—one of the most important psychological variables—and subjecting it to further research and study to clarify its nature, given that it is a vital and contemporary concept in the field of mental health.
- Providing insight into the concept of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants.
- Highlighting the importance of the study by addressing the topic of psychological flow and the strengths it represents within an individual's personality.

Second: Practical Significance: The practical significance lies in the potential application of the study and its findings, as follows:

- This research may contribute to identifying the needs of this group, thereby facilitating the provision of necessary psychological services.
- It may also contribute to the development of programs designed to foster psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants.

2- Objectives of the Study: The current study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To determine the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants.
- To identify differences in the degree of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants based on the variable of academic specialization.

3- Scope of the Study:

The scope of the study is defined as follows:

5-1- Topical Scope: This study is limited to assessing the level of psychological flow among guidance consultants and examining these levels in relation to the variable of academic specialization (Psychology, Educational Sciences, and Sociology).

5-2- Geographical (Spatial) Scope: This study was conducted on counselors affiliated with the Directorate of Education within the territory of El Oued Province.

5-3- Human Scope: The study covered all 100 integrated school and vocational guidance and counseling counselors.

5-1-

5-2- Timeframe: The research instruments were administered during January and March of the 2023–2024 academic year.

The scope of the current study is also defined by the instruments employed and the methodology adopted.

6- Operational definitions of study variables:

Defining study variables within specific parameters—known as operational definitions—enables those interested in the issue to understand the variable exactly as the researcher intends. Since researchers may differ or agree on the meanings and implications of certain variables, and to avoid any confusion or ambiguity that might hinder the understanding of our study and its findings, it is essential to provide operational definitions for the key variables based on the context in which they are used. These are as follows:

- Psychological Flow: Operationally, psychological flow is defined as an internal state representing complete and total immersion (absorption) in performing a specific task that aligns with the abilities and skills of the school and vocational guidance counselor; the task is neither so demanding that it causes anxiety nor so simple and easy that it leads to boredom.

It is operationally measured by the score obtained by sample members upon responding to the items of the psychological flow scale used in the current research.

Study methodology and procedures:

1- Study methodology: Based on the study's problem and research questions, the descriptive-analytical method was adopted. This approach, which involves describing the phenomenon as it exists in reality, was chosen as it is best suited to achieving the study's objective, thereby allowing for both qualitative and quantitative representation of the phenomenon. 2- Study Population and Sample:

The study population consists of all school and vocational guidance and counseling advisors integrated pursuant to Executive Decree No. 19-336 (dated December 9, 2019), which concerns the integration of beneficiaries from the professional and social integration schemes for degree holders. According to statistics from the El Oued Province Directorate of Education for the 2023–2024 academic year, this group totals 100 advisors. Regarding the sample, a comprehensive survey approach was adopted following a preliminary pilot study involving 30 advisors; consequently, the final sample to which the research instrument was administered comprised 70 advisors. Questionnaires were distributed electronically, with paper copies provided to those who did not receive the digital version; all questionnaires were successfully retrieved. The following table details the characteristics of the primary study sample:

Table (01): Count and distribution of the main study sample members.

%	N	Specializations
%48.57	34	Psychology
%32.85	23	Sociology
%18.57	13	Educational Sciences
%100	70	Total

Table (03) reveals that counselors specializing in psychology—numbering 34 (48.57%)—outnumber those in other specializations; there are 23 counselors specializing in sociology (32.85%) and 13 in educational sciences (18.57%) within the study sample. This indicates that the study sample is predominantly composed of counselors specializing in psychology.

4- Study Instrument:

To achieve the study's objectives, the current research utilized the psychological flow scale developed by Jackson and Marsh (1996). This scale consists of 36 positive statements representing the dimensions of psychological flow as defined by Csikszentmihalyi. The scale was translated from English into Arabic by students, and a five-point Likert scale was used for scoring, with a specific value assigned to each response option as shown in the table below.

Table (2): Scores for response alternatives on the psychological flow scale.

It never happens.	It happens rarely.	It happens sometime s.	It often happens.	It always happens.	Alternative
05	04	03	02	01	Grade

- Psychometric Properties of the Scale:

To ensure the validity of the instrument and have confidence in its results—thereby rendering it suitable for application—the researcher must first verify its validity and reliability. This was carried out in the present study by confirming the scale's validity and reliability within both the broader Arab context and the local setting.

1- Scale Validity: Validity was assessed using the internal consistency method by calculating correlation coefficients between the score of each item and the total score of the scale items. The results were as follows:

.Table (03): Internal consistency coefficients for the flow scale

Correlation coefficient (PER)	N	Correlation coefficient (PER)	N	Correlation coefficient (PER)	N	Correlation coefficient (PER)	N
0.23	28	0.84	19	0.82	10	0.20	01
0.51	29	0.88	20	0.89	11	0.11	02
0.39	30	0.77	21	0.87	12	0.77	03
0.65	31	0.75	22	0.85	13	0.86	04
0.22	32	0.27	23	0.76	14	0.77	05
0.41	33	0.51	24	0.86	15	0.86	06

0.65	34	0.40	25	0.93	16	0.83	07
0.33	35	0.56	26	0.52	17	0.84	08
0.59	36	0.29	27	0.79	18	0.77	09

Based on the results presented in Table (05)—which show the internal consistency coefficients (correlation coefficients) between each item of the psychological flow scale and the scale's total score—we observe that all correlation coefficients between individual item scores and the total score were positive, ranging from a high of 0.93 to a low of 0.11. These coefficients are statistically significant at the 0.01 level; consequently, the psychological flow scale can be deemed valid, as it effectively measures the construct it was designed to assess.

1- Scale Reliability: To determine the scale's reliability within the local context, the "Cronbach's alpha" method was employed. This is a key measure of internal consistency, linking the reliability of the test to the reliability of its individual items—particularly given that the scale offers more than two response options (specifically, five alternatives) (Maamariya, 2007, p. 184). The results were as follows:

Table (4): Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the psychological flow scale.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient	N
0.76	36

The result shown in Table (04)—representing the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the psychological flow scale—indicates a value of 0.76. This is a high value, allowing us to conclude that the psychological flow scale used possesses a high degree of reliability.

Having verified the scale's psychometric properties, it was adopted for the current study.

4- Main Study Procedures:

After confirming the validity of the scale designed for counselors, we proceeded with field administration. The scale was distributed electronically via email to all tenured school and vocational guidance and counseling counselors affiliated with the El Oued Province Directorate of Education for the 2023–2024 academic year during the first three weeks of March 2024. For those who did not receive the electronic version, paper copies were distributed; ultimately, all questionnaires were collected. The researchers carried out these procedures during coordination meetings. Following the compilation of the obtained results, statistical processing was conducted using the following methods:

1- Statistical Methods: To derive the results, several statistical methods appropriate for the nature of the research questions were employed: the hypothesized mean, the paired-sample t-test, and One-Way ANOVA.

2- Presentation and Discussion of Study Results:

1- Presentation and analysis of the study hypotheses' results:

1-1- Presentation and analysis of the results regarding the first hypothesis:

This hypothesis states that there are statistically significant differences between the mean psychological flow scores of school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothesized mean.

To verify this hypothesis and determine the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors, a paired-sample t-test was used. This involved calculating the difference between the scale's hypothesized mean (set at 108) and the sample's mean score on the psychological flow scale. The following table illustrates the obtained results:

Table 05

Shows the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling advisors.

Hypothetical mean = 108							Variable
sig	Level of sig	"T "		N	Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	
		Calculated	Braided				
0.000	0.05	12.13	1.65	69	17.49	133.37	Flow

Table (05) shows that the sample size is 70. The arithmetic mean of the sample's responses on the psychological flow scale was 133.37, with a standard deviation of 17.49. To determine the significance of the difference between the sample mean and the hypothesized mean (108), a one-sample t-test was used. The t-value was 12.13—exceeding the critical t-value—with a significance level of 0.000. These results indicate a difference between the empirical mean of psychological flow scores among school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothesized mean. A comparison of the means reveals that the empirical mean is higher than the hypothesized mean—a finding confirmed by the t-test results—leading to the conclusion that the study sample exhibits high levels of psychological flow.

Consequently, the research hypothesis was accepted, stating that there are statistically significant differences between the mean psychological flow scores of school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothesized mean.

The statistical analysis confirms that the sample members possess a high level of psychological flow. This aligns with findings from numerous studies in the field; specifically, the results of the current study closely match those of Al-Dhaheri and Al-Ghanami (2023). Their study, which aimed to assess psychological flow levels among a sample of educational counselors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, also concluded that the level of psychological flow was high. In the same context, a study by Mahboub (2020)—which aimed, among other things, to assess the level of psychological flow among a sample of intensive care nurses in government hospitals in Makkah during the COVID-19 pandemic—found that the level of psychological flow was high.

Conversely, the findings of Al-Ruwaili's (2019) study align to some extent with those of the current study, indicating a moderate level of psychological flow among student counselors in the Turaif Governorate of Saudi Arabia.

We attribute this high level of psychological flow to a supportive social climate that fosters such a state among counselors—an environment present in educational institutions. This is due to a clear societal understanding of the guidance counselor's role and the importance of their presence within these institutions. This shift has been reinforced by recent integration efforts within the education sector, ensuring that every institution has a guidance counselor—with larger schools (exceeding 1,000 students) employing multiple counselors. Since the experience of flow arises spontaneously when surrounding conditions are conducive and facilitative, this phenomenon is clearly evident in the discussions held by counselors during coordination meetings. This outcome may also stem from the counselors' genuine enjoyment of their work and the fulfillment of their professional duties—an intrinsic motivator that fosters the "flow" experience. Furthermore, immediate feedback from the community, administration, and those around them—manifested through the evaluation of quarterly reports by the institution head and the guidance center director, the rate of appeals, informational meetings with parents, and participation in class councils—provides the counselor with input that can trigger this state of flow.

Additionally, this result may be attributed to the fact that most counselors view the profession as their livelihood and a means for self-actualization and the practical application of their academic specializations. This is particularly relevant given that all sample members—beneficiaries of the professional and social integration schemes for degree holders under Executive Decree No. 19-336 (dated December 9, 2019)—were previously engaged in administrative tasks far removed from their fields of study. Consequently, they strive to give their utmost effort, thereby strengthening their sense of belonging to the profession and the workplace, as well as their enthusiasm for the school environment and their duties. This positive mindset and favorable perception of the work undoubtedly lead to a state of deep immersion and absorption—where they lose awareness of themselves and their immediate surroundings—resulting in spontaneous behavior and highly engaged interaction with students, driven by their enjoyment of the role and their positive views on the counseling profession, especially following their prior experiences and the struggles associated with marginalization during the integration process. This aligns with the findings of previous studies and the theoretical literature. Abdel-Karim and Abu Al-Wafa (2020) noted that "differentiation" and "integration" are two fundamental prerequisites for the state of flow to occur. "Differentiation" refers to the alignment of the counselor's desires and needs with the professional activity they are performing, while "integration" refers to the alignment of the counselor's desires and needs with those of others—specifically the school and the students. When a counselor feels integrated with the school's objectives and the students' needs, they are able to perform their work with intrinsic motivation

and complete, unforced spontaneity, driven by the state of psychological flow—a state characterized by deep immersion and enjoyment.

Furthermore, the findings of the current study are consistent with the theoretical framework regarding the elements and components of psychological flow as conceptualized by Mihaly. This concept is defined by the equation: Skills + Challenges = Flow. Given that the school environment and educational work are inherently filled with challenges, a counselor who possesses skills commensurate with these challenges is likely to enter a state of psychological flow.

This result may also be attributed to the fact that psychological flow occurs more frequently among individuals with less experience, as they are keen to prove themselves—thereby increasing their motivation—and strive to excel and exert greater effort to complete tasks. Consequently, they experience higher levels of flow compared to those with more experience. This finding is supported by the study of Al-Dhahiri and Al-Ghannami (2023), which revealed statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group before and after the training program, favoring the post-test results.

-2-1 Presentation and Analysis of Results for the Second Hypothesis :

This hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants based on the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, Sociology)".

To verify this hypothesis and determine the statistical significance of the differences between the mean performance scores of school and vocational guidance and counseling consultants on the psychological flow scale—categorized by academic specialization (Psychology, Educational Sciences, Sociology)—a One-Way ANOVA test was employed. The following table presents the obtained results:

Table 06

Shows the results of the One-Way ANOVA test to determine the significance of differences in psychological flow based on the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, Sociology)

Level of significance	Probability value	'f''	Mean of squares	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Source of variation
Non-indicative	0.51	0.66	206.413	02	412.826	Between groups
			309.187	67	20715.516	Within groups
			/	69	21128.343	Total

Table (06) shows the results of the one-way ANOVA, where the F-value was 0.66 with a p-value of 0.516. Since this p-value exceeds the significance level of 0.05, the result is not statistically significant; consequently, there are no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors attributable to the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, or Sociology).

Accordingly, the research hypothesis—which posited the existence of differences between the sample's mean psychological flow scores and the hypothesized mean at the 0.05 significance level—was rejected. Instead, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, stating that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors attributable to the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, or Sociology).

The statistical analysis results confirmed the absence of statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors based on the academic specialization variable (Psychology, Educational Sciences, or Sociology). The results of the current study can be attributed to

the clarity of the tasks assigned to the counselor—as outlined in Ministerial Circular No. 1051 (dated June 23, 2018), which defines the organizational procedures for the duties and activities of school and vocational guidance counselors. This clarity fosters a sense of confidence and certainty regarding performance, as clear goals are a key component of the psychological state of "flow." This state, in turn, facilitates problem-solving—particularly regarding issues arising from diverse specializations. In this context, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2009, p. 90) note that an individual can become immersed in an activity and experience flow if there are clear goals and immediate feedback; goal clarity implies a thorough understanding of what is required and the ability to follow a specific plan, whereas a lack of clarity makes it difficult to focus on the task and see it through to completion. This result—the absence of differences between specializations—may also be attributed to the participants' intense focus during their training and internship period, as well as their drive to master the duties of a guidance counselor, given that they were all newly appointed. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of "flow" as described by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who linked the flow experience to a state of "optimal learning." Through his research at the University of Chicago, he defined it as "a state of concentration that rises to the level of total absorption—a wonderful feeling of mastering the present moment and performing at the peak of one's abilities. In this state of optimal learning, the learner is completely immersed in the subject matter, and comprehension reaches its highest level" (Ali, 2019, p. 28). This outcome may also be attributed to favorable conditions that facilitate its emergence—specifically, the limited scope of the assigned district. A counselor assigned to a secondary school covers only that school, while one assigned to an intermediate school covers only the primary schools affiliated with it. This reduced workload allows counselors to dedicate themselves fully to guidance tasks; having their own offices enables them to focus on a single institution. As noted by Abu Halawa (2013), one dimension of psychological flow requires intense, total concentration on a specific task or activity, making it easier for individuals to begin experiencing flow. Furthermore, having clear goals for the activity helps the individual focus their attention on it. Focused attention is the essence of flow; it demands significant effort and leads the individual to become completely immersed in the activity, losing awareness of the self and everything else around them.

Consequently, the experience arises without prior planning by the individual. This is corroborated by the results regarding the first hypothesis—specifically, the high level of psychological flow observed. In this context, Mahjoub (2021) notes that the experience of psychological flow is not linked to the number of years of work or experience so much as it is to personal predispositions and the availability of environmental conditions that allow this optimal state of flow to emerge. This aligns with the findings of Ibn Al-Sheikh (2015), who concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among secondary school teachers based on the variable of experience.

This result may also be attributed to job satisfaction, which in turn fosters psychological flow. Citing Khashaba (2017), Myers and Diener note that job satisfaction enhances the sense of belonging, provides a network of human relationships, and helps the individual establish a social identity. Conversely, job dissatisfaction leads to negative consequences—specifically, a decline in psychological flow—manifesting in two ways: first, when challenges exceed the individual's skills or the time available to complete them, anxiety and stress levels rise; second, when challenges fall far short of the individual's skills or the allotted time, boredom sets in. Between boredom and anxiety lies a middle ground where the individual can balance the challenges faced with their existing skills; in this state, they experience happiness and an increase in psychological flow.

This result can also be attributed to the role of the bi-monthly coordination meetings held at the guidance center, as well as the interaction with experienced counselors and the training provided for each scheduled activity—organized according to the annual distribution of guidance counselors' tasks. Yasser Abdul Karim Bakkar outlines the points through which an individual can achieve a state of "flow"—specifically, focusing intensely on the task at hand in the present moment, rather than dwelling on the past (mistakes) or the future (gains). High concentration is the essence of flow; while this step requires some effort, once the state of flow is reached, a self-sustaining momentum takes over, allowing the individual to perform the work calmly and without significant nervous strain (Diab, 2018.)

-Summary of Study Results and Recommendations :

The current study emerged from previous research and field observations recognizing school guidance as one of the most important services undertaken by the modern school system. Since the success of school guidance and counseling depends largely on the effectiveness of the school and vocational guidance counselor, the counselor must possess positive mental health and a good quality of life to effectively assist students. Psychological flow represents the optimal human experience and the highest manifestation of mental health; indeed, it serves as an underlying force driving individual success. It equips the individual with the energy to control emotions and break free from the burden of psychological stress, while also enhancing performance and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, it plays an active role in helping the individual overcome anticipated obstacles encountered while performing tasks—a state achieved through the alignment of mental clarity, emotional well-being, and positive performance.

Given that the guidance counselor needs to experience a degree of psychological flow, this topic falls within the scope of positive psychology. It is hoped that counselors will recognize the importance of this concept and incorporate it into the guidance services they provide to students. The aim is to assist students in achieving psychological adjustment and harmony, fostering self-development and self-actualization, and equipping them with the drive to face life's hardships and challenges. Ultimately, this fosters happiness and builds a positive personality, enabling individuals to reach the pinnacle of mental well-being—the supreme goal of both positive psychology and guidance services.

Accordingly, this study was conducted. Based on the theoretical framework, the empirical analysis, the study hypotheses, and the methodological procedures employed to test those hypotheses, the following results were reached:

□ There are statistically significant differences (at the 0.05 level) between the mean scores of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors and the hypothesized mean.

□ There are no statistically significant differences in the level of psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors attributable to the variable of academic specialization (Psychology, Educational Sciences, or Sociology.)

- Study Recommendations:

Based on the foregoing, the researchers propose the following:

- The need to focus on positive psychology and highlight its importance by addressing its concepts and variables through seminars, research, and lectures.
- A call for those involved in the educational process to conduct further studies and research on the topic of psychological flow across various fields, particularly given the relative scarcity of studies on this subject within the Arab context.
- Efforts by guidance centers to sustain psychological flow among school and vocational guidance counselors, and the development of counseling programs for counselors—integrated into coordination meetings—to enhance this state.

- Study Proposals:

Accordingly, the researchers propose the following complementary studies:

- Conducting a study with a larger sample to obtain more precise results.
- Examining psychological flow and its relationship with other variables within the same sample.
- Investigating the impact of a counseling program on the psychological flow of school and vocational guidance counselors.
- Studying psychological flow in conjunction with other variables such as personality traits, optimism, and self-efficacy.

In conclusion, the results obtained in this study remain valid within the scope of the selected sample and the adopted instrument; this paves the way for further research to be undertaken by other scholars.

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