مستوى التفكير الإيجابي والتكيف مع الضغط والأحداث المجهدة بين طلاب الجامعات أثناء الحرب: غزة كدراسة حالة

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الملخص

هدفت الدراسة إلى استكشاف مستويات التفكير الإيجابي، والتكيف مع الضغوط، والتوافق مع الأحداث الضاغطة لدى طلبة الجامعات خلال الحرب على غزة. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، من خلال استخدام استبانة مكونة من (٤٢) فقرة، وُزِّعت على عينة بلغت (٢٦٠) طالبًا وطالبة من جامعة الأزهر وجامعة الأقصى في قطاع غزة، تم اختيارهم بالطريقة العنقودية.

أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة ارتباطية موجبة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين التفكير الإيجابي والتكيف مع الضغوط والتوافق مع الأحداث الضاغطة، مما يشير إلى أن ارتفاع مستوى التفكير الإيجابي يسهم في تعزيز قدرة الطلبة على مواجهة الضغوط والتكيف مع التحديات. كما بينت النتائج عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية تُعزى إلى متغيرات الجنس أو العمر أو المستوى الدراسي أو مكان السكن.

وأوصت الدراسة بضرورة تعزيز الدعم النفسي والاجتماعي للطلبة في غزة خلال الأزمات، من خلال توفير خدمات الإرشاد النفسي والبرامج التدريبية الهادفة إلى تنمية مهارات التفكير الإيجابي والتعامل مع الضغوط.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفكير الإيجابي، التكيف مع الضغوط، التوافق مع الأحداث الضاغطة، طلبة الجامعات الفلسطينية، الحرب على غزة.

The Level of Positive Thinking and Adaptation to Stress and Stressful Events Among University Students During Wartime: Gaza as a Case Study

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Abstract

The study aimed to explore the levels of positive thinking, stress coping, and adaptation to stressful events among university students during the war in Gaza. A descriptive analytical approach was used, employing a 42-item questionnaire distributed to a sample of 260 students from Al-Azhar University and Al-Aqsa University in Gaza, selected through cluster sampling.

The findings revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between positive thinking, stress coping, and adaptation to stressful events, indicating that higher levels of positive thinking enhance students' ability to manage stress and adapt to challenges. Additionally, no significant differences were found based on gender, age, academic level, or place of residence.

The study recommended strengthening psychological and social support for students in Gaza during crises by providing psychological counseling and training programs to develop positive thinking and stress-coping skills.

Keywords: Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, Adaptation to Stressful Events, Palestinian University Students, Gaza War**.**

Introduction

Throughout life, individuals face various stressful situations that trigger emotional responses, influencing both themselves and their surroundings. The ways people handle these challenges vary based on their skills, strategies, and past experiences (Rustam & Naser, 2024). Among these stressors, wars have particularly devastating effects on mental health, leading to anxiety, distress, violence, and social isolation (Albert, 2020). These impacts extend beyond immediate emotional distress, shaping individual behavior in the long term (Zhai, 2021). The war in Gaza exemplifies this, profoundly affecting the psychological and social well-being of its residents, particularly university students, who endured traumatic experiences such as the destruction of educational institutions and the loss of faculty members and peers (Al-Arian, 2024; Ahmed, 2022). Amid such adversities, positive thinking plays a crucial role in resilience and adaptability. It fosters psychological well-being, shifting focus from devastation to achievable goals such as academic success and personal growth (Abdel-Halim, 2024). Harriet et al. (2018) highlight that positive thinking enables individuals to manage emotions effectively, promoting solution-focused coping strategies (Kim, 2017). During the war in Gaza, stress adaptation became essential, as students faced overwhelming psychological and social pressures. Effective coping strategies, both individual and collective, help mitigate war's negative effects and sustain daily functioning (Sayed et al., 2024). By directing attention to controllable aspects, students can maintain a sense of achievement and stability despite ongoing challenges (Bdier et al., 2023; Eyni et al., 2021). War-related stressors encompass psychological, social, and physical challenges, including fear, displacement, and health concerns (Tandler, 2024). Their severity depends on the intensity and duration of conflict, as well as individuals' proximity to war zones (Maciejewski et al., 2020). Positive thinking mitigates these effects by promoting emotional regulation and problem-solving, while stress adaptation involves

strategies such as reframing situations and managing stress triggers. These skills enable students to navigate adversity, fostering resilience and personal growth.

This study aims to examine the relationship between positive thinking and stress adaptation among university students during wartime, focusing on Gaza as a case study.

1- Study Problem:

During the war that erupted on October 7, 2023, and lasted for 15 months, the Gaza Strip endured exceptionally harsh and unprecedented conditions unlike any modern conflict. These circumstances led to severe hardships that may have negatively impacted the psychological, social, and academic well-being of young individuals, particularly university students. The war resulted in the destruction of educational institutions and academic infrastructure, the loss and disappearance of numerous professors and students, and injuries to many others. These profound consequences prompted the researchers to examine the psychological impact of these adversities on university students, as such challenges could significantly affect their academic future. From their geographically distant position, the researchers sought to assess the students' mental health under war conditions by measuring their levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events—psychological factors that, when present together, play a crucial role in overcoming such hardships.

Based on the above, the study problem is summarized in the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war in Gaza?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the war in Gaza?

3. Are there statistically significant differences in the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among students in Gaza based on demographic variables (gender, age, academic level, and place of residence)?

2- Study Objectives:

This study aims to:

1. Identify the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war in Gaza.
2. Examine the relationship between positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among students during the war in Gaza.
3. Determine whether demographic variables (gender, place of residence, and academic level) influence the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among students during the war in Gaza.

3- Study Hypotheses:

This study seeks to test the following hypotheses:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ between positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza.
2. There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ in the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the war on Gaza due to demographic variables (gender, age, academic level, and place of residence).

4- Operational Definitions

Positive Thinking is operationally defined as the degree to which university students maintain optimistic expectations, focus

on constructive aspects of situations, and believe in their ability to overcome challenges during wartime. It is measured by the participants' scores on the positive thinking dimension of the study questionnaire, where higher scores indicate higher levels of positive thinking.

Stress Coping is operationally defined as the set of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies employed by university students to manage and reduce the effects of stress arising from wartime conditions. It is measured by the participants' scores on the stress coping dimension of the study questionnaire, where higher scores indicate greater effectiveness in coping with stress.

Adaptation to Stressful Events is operationally defined as the ability of university students to adjust psychologically, socially, and academically to stressful circumstances and wartime experiences while maintaining functional daily performance. It is measured by the participants' scores on the adaptation to stressful events dimension of the study questionnaire, where higher scores indicate better adaptation.

Palestinian University Students are operationally defined as undergraduate students enrolled at Al-Azhar University and Al-Aqsa University in Gaza during the period of data collection and who participated in the study.

The Gaza War is operationally defined as the ongoing armed conflict in the Gaza Strip that began on October 7, 2023, and its associated consequences, including displacement, insecurity, disruption of education, loss of resources, and exposure to stressful events. For the purposes of this study, it refers to the war-related conditions experienced by Palestinian university students during the period of data collection.

5- Theoretical Framework

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted for decades, intensifying with the onset of the Israeli occupation in 1948. At that time, "914,221 Palestinian refugees" were registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Following

the Naksa of 1967, approximately "175,000 refugees" were displaced for a second time. The conflict reached critical peaks during the First Intifada in 1987, the Al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000, and successive wars on Gaza (Abudayya et al., 2023), culminating in the latest escalation, the Al-Aqsa Flood War, which began on October 7, 2023.

The impact of war on mental health, as seen in the recent Gaza conflict, is a crucial subject reflecting the psychological toll of violence on individuals and communities. Prolonged exposure to war-related hardships, including continuous bombardment, loss of loved ones, and forced displacement, can lead to increased levels of anxiety and depression. Harsh living conditions exacerbate feelings of grief and isolation. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), armed conflicts significantly contribute to rising rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), further highlighting the urgent need for mental health services and psychological support (Rjoub, 2024).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is a psychological disorder that develops in individuals exposed to traumatic, frightening, or life-threatening events. Symptoms include intrusive flashbacks, avoidance behaviors, and emotional distress. Limited access to support and the social stigma surrounding mental health issues often exacerbate these symptoms. However, positive resilience and strong social relationships can aid in stress adaptation and emotional recovery (Babicka-Wirkus et al., 2021).

In Gaza, some of the most prevalent PTSD symptoms include hyperarousal, reliving traumatic experiences, depression, physical symptoms, emotional distress, and chronic tension. Many individuals report recurrent nightmares related to life-threatening situations, along with cognitive, emotional, and social impairments of moderate to severe intensity (Ibid).

Additionally, Gazans face further challenges due to the ongoing blockade, which restricts access to adequate healthcare and limits the availability of psychological treatment. This

underscores the importance of raising awareness about mental health and providing psychological and social support to affected individuals, ultimately strengthening their resilience against the stress and suffering caused by war (Rjoub, 2024).

Several studies, including those by Skeik & Ahmed (2023) and Al-Qubaisi (2022), have examined the effectiveness of psychological counseling programs in alleviating psychological distress through positive thinking. Their findings emphasize the role of positive thinking in enhancing psychological well-being.

Further research, including studies by Al-Qallali (2023), Zahaika (2022), Shams (2023), Herman et al. (2018), and Rahimi & Mousavi (2017), has demonstrated the significant impact of adopting a positive mindset, effective stress adaptation, and proactive coping strategies in improving mental health and reducing the psychological burden of life's hardships. However, the psychological and social conditions of university students in Gaza during wartime present unique challenges that differ from experiences in peacetime.

The Role of Positive Thinking, Stress Adaptation, and Coping with Stressful Events During Crises

5-1- Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is a cognitive process that directs thoughts and emotions toward optimism and hope, enhancing individuals' ability to manage challenges and life pressures more effectively. This mental approach depends on personal perceptions and how individuals interpret daily events and experiences (Skeik & Ahmed, 2023). Research indicates that positive thinking is a crucial factor in improving both mental and physical health, with studies demonstrating that individuals with a positive mindset are better equipped to manage psychological stress and reduce levels of anxiety and tension (Al-Harbi, 2021).

From the researchers' perspective, positive thinking involves directing one's thoughts and emotions toward optimism and hope, which strengthens individuals' resilience in facing life's

difficulties. It also enhances self-confidence and the ability to achieve personal goals.

Theories of Positive Thinking

Several theories have explored positive thinking and its implications:

- **General Positivity Theory** emphasizes fostering happiness and optimism, contributing to psychological well-being.
- **Cognitive Theory** explains how thoughts influence emotions and behaviors, demonstrating that positive thinking generates positive emotions, whereas negative thinking has adverse effects.
- **Self-Affirmation Theory** suggests that individuals can enhance positive thinking by reaffirming their values and strengths.
- **Hope Theory** highlights hope as a motivational force that drives goal-setting and achievement through positive planning.
- **Social Learning Theory** illustrates how individuals learn from observing others, making those with a positive mindset role models for others.
- **Self-Motivation Theory** asserts that individuals can inspire themselves by setting positive goals, with positive thinking playing a central role in sustaining motivation (Wilson et al., 2020).

Strategies for Developing Positive Thinking

Positive thinking strategies include meditation, reframing negative thoughts, social support, and setting SMART goals. These techniques help enhance individuals' ability to adapt to challenging circumstances and promote psychological resilience (Al-Harbi, 2023).

5-2- Stress Coping

Stress coping refers to the methods individuals employ to manage challenges and hardships through specific strategies. People's responses to stress vary depending on their personalities

and circumstances. There are both positive and negative coping strategies. Positive coping strategies include techniques that reduce stress, such as relaxation and self-directed positive thinking. In contrast, negative strategies provide short-term relief but contribute to prolonged stress, such as self-pity, surrender, and social withdrawal (Tandler, 2024).

Theories Explaining Stress Coping

Several theories have explored stress coping mechanisms, with one of the most notable being the "Stress and Coping Theory." This theory suggests that the strategies individuals use to manage demands significantly impact their ability to handle stressful events. It also emphasizes that these strategies play a long-term role in enhancing psychological well-being (Moreno-Montero et al., 2024).

The study suggest that stress coping reflects how individuals respond to and interact with adversities by adopting strategies that either help them manage stress positively or negatively.

Positive Coping Strategies (Zahaika, 2022)

1. Problem-solving: The ability to identify the source of a problem, understand it, and develop alternatives to address it.
2. Optimism: Maintaining a positive outlook on events and situations.
3. Seeking support and assistance: Turning to supportive individuals, such as family, friends, and colleagues, when needed.
4. Self-assertion: Expressing emotions and thoughts confidently while defending one’s rights in a socially acceptable manner.
5. Time management: Utilizing time effectively to balance personal and social commitments.
6. Impulse control: Regulating emotions and reactions while expressing them appropriately.

5-3- Stressful Events

Maciejewski et al. (2020) define stressful events as sudden and intense life changes that necessitate adaptive responses. These changes, such as a decline in income or academic difficulties, require individuals to readjust, which may impact their psychological and physical well-being. To regain balance, individuals must engage in coping responses.

Tarantino et al. (2021) classify stressful events into two categories:

1. Normative events: Predictable life events such as marriage and parenthood.
2. Non-normative events: Unexpected life events, such as the loss of a loved one or forced displacement.

Madera (2021) describes stressful events as internal and external sources of pressure that disrupt an individual's ability to respond appropriately to a situation, leading to emotional and physiological disturbances that affect personality. Some theories distinguish between dependent stressful events, which are partially influenced by an individual’s behavior, and independent stressful events, which occur regardless of an individual's actions.

The researchers assert that stressful life events represent a series of external challenges that students encounter both in school and beyond, requiring quick adaptation to mitigate their adverse psychological, physical, and social effects.

Classification of Stressful Events

Varela et al. (2019) categorize stressful events into the following types:

- Psychological and emotional issues: Anxiety, depression, burnout, and impulsiveness.
- Economic difficulties: Financial constraints and challenges in meeting basic needs.
- Family and social problems: Loss of a family member, family conflicts, and difficulties in forming friendships.

Theories Explaining Stressful Events

1. Holmes and Rahe Model: Emphasizes the impact of environmental changes in causing psychological stress.
2. Lazarus Model: Highlights the role of personal perception in interpreting and managing stress.
3. Schwartz Model: Explores the relationship between psychological factors and physiological responses to stressful events (Tarantino et al., 2021).

6- Research Approach

The descriptive-analytical approach with a correlational design was chosen due to its suitability for achieving the study's objectives.

7- Study Population

The study population comprised all regular university students in Gaza during the 2023 war, estimated at approximately 65,000 students distributed across **six** universities. Obtaining an accurate count was challenging due to the war, which led to injuries and casualties among students. The study was conducted amid the war in December 2024.

8- Study Sample

All six regular universities in Gaza were contacted during the 2023 war. However, only two universities—Al-Aqsa University and Al-Azhar University—responded. An attempt was made to conduct a comprehensive survey of their students by distributing the questionnaire electronically, as it was the only feasible means of reaching them. However, this process was hindered by prolonged and frequent disruptions in internet and electricity **services** in Gaza during the war.

A total of 260 completed questionnaires were retrieved from the students. Table (1) presents the distribution of the study sample based on demographic variables.

Table 1:
Distribution of the Study Sample by Independent Variables

Variable	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	١٢٩	٤٩.٦
Female	١٣١	٥٠.٤
Total	٢٦٠	١٠٠%
Age		
< 20 years	٦٢	٢٣.٨
٢٠–25 years	١٤٧	٥٦.٦
> 25 years	١٢	٤.٦
Total	٢٦٠	١٠٠%
Academic Level		
Bachelor's	٢٠٦	٧٩.٢
Master's	٣٩	١٥.٠
Doctorate	١٥	٥.٨
Total	٢٦٠	١٠٠%
Place of Residence		
City	٥٨	٢٢.٣
Village	١٨٤	٧٠.٨
Refugee Camp	١٨	٦.٩
Total	٢٦٠	١٠٠%

9- Study Instrument

A questionnaire was designed consisting of three scales, each adapted from previous studies:

- The Positive Thinking Scale from Al-Mousawi (2023).
- The Stress Coping Scale from Thabet (1997).
- The Stressful Events Scale from Al-Sumairi & Abu Mustafa (2008).

The questionnaire was structured using a five-point Likert scale, with response options as follows:

- Always (5 points)
- Often (4 points)
- Sometimes (3 points)

- Rarely (2 points)
- Never (1 point)

The questionnaire consisted of a total of 42 items, distributed across the study's main components as follows:

- Positive Thinking: 16 items
- Stress Coping: 13 items
- Dealing with Stressful Events: 13 items

10- Instrument Validity

The validity of the study instrument was assessed through the following methods:

1. Face Validity

The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts in psychology, sociology, and research methodology to ensure its comprehensiveness and accuracy. Modifications were made based on their feedback.

2. Internal Consistency Validity

Internal consistency validity was examined by administering the questionnaire to a pilot sample of 23 university students in Gaza. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between each item's score and the total score of its respective scale using the SPSS statistical software. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 2:
Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Items and Total Score

Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation
١	.574**٠	١١	.636**٠	٢١	.665**٠
٢	.656**٠	١٢	.711**٠	٢٢	.822**٠
٣	.701**٠	١٣	.601**٠	٢٣	.644**٠
٤	.721**٠	١٤	.607**٠	٢٤	.669**٠
٥	.668**٠	١٥	.738**٠	٢٥	.617**٠
٦	.738**٠	١٦	.718**٠	٢٦	.685**٠
٧	.641**٠	١٧	.824**٠	٢٧	.763**٠

٨	.635**٠	١٨	.666**٠	٢٨	.610**٠
٩	.710**٠	١٩	.712**٠	٢٩	.710**٠
١٠	.685**٠	٢٠	.677**٠	٣٠	.825**٠

****Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ****
Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that all questionnaire items are statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, confirming a high degree of internal consistency. The lowest Pearson correlation coefficient recorded was 0.574, while the highest was 0.825. This demonstrates the validity of the questionnaire items and their effectiveness in measuring the intended objectives. Consequently, no items were omitted or removed.

11- Instrument Reliability

To determine the reliability of the study instrument, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was utilized. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3:
Cronbach's Alpha for Instrument Reliability

Domain	Alpha Coefficient	Threshold	Acceptance
Positive Thinking	٠.٨٨	≥ 0.60	Accepted
Coping with Stress	٠.٨٩	≥ 0.60	Accepted
Coping with Stressful Events	٠.٨٢	≥ 0.60	Accepted

Based on the findings, the correlation coefficient is significantly high, indicating that the instrument demonstrates a strong level of reliability.

12- Statistical Data Analysis

The collected data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The following statistical techniques were employed:

1. Descriptive Analysis: Used to summarize and present the key characteristics of the collected data, including mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages to analyze demographic data and participants' response distributions.
2. T-test: Applied to determine the presence of statistically significant differences between two or more groups and to compare study variables' scores.
3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Used to examine differences among more than two groups and assess the effects of multiple demographic variables on the study variables.
4. Correlation Analysis: Conducted to explore the relationships between two or more variables. Pearson or Spearman correlation tests were used to measure the strength and direction of these relationships.
5. Validity and Reliability Measures: Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument.

13- Study Results and Discussion

Results Related to the Main Research Question

What is the level of positive thinking, coping with stress, and dealing with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza?

To address this question, **means, standard deviations, and percentages** were used. Tables (4, 5, and 6) illustrate these results.

1. Positive Thinking Dimension:

(Details of statistical findings, analysis, and discussion will follow based on the provided tables).

Table 4:
Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentages of the Level of Positive Thinking Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza, Arranged in Descending Order by Level

No.	Statement	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Level
1	I can make my life happy despite the war and suffering.	3.8667	1.18254	77.33%	High
2	I believe that tomorrow will be better than today.	3.8452	1.18121	77.10%	High
3	I still have great hope for the future despite the war's suffering.	3.7589	1.17989	76.86%	High
4	I think I will be better off in the future.	3.7421	1.17745	76.50%	High
5	Despite the war, I will achieve the success I strive for in various aspects of my life.	3.7124	1.17569	76.01%	High
6	I always expect the best despite the difficult circumstances we are living through.	3.6589	1.17487	75.47%	High

7	I control my anger and emotions when dealing with others.	3.6457	1.17326	75.33%	High
8	I do not let difficult circumstances lower my morale.	3.6325	1.17236	75.11%	High
9	Despite the difficult circumstances, I can maintain a calm mood.	3.6241	1.16875	74.25%	High
10	I share positive emotions with others.	3.6102	1.16787	73.55%	High
11	I carry on with my daily life despite the ongoing war.	3.6000	1.16425	73.29%	High
12	I am still able to remain patient despite the suffering and difficult events.	3.5898	1.16352	72.89%	High
13	I help others despite my own suffering.	3.5752	1.13449	72.33%	High
14	I believe I can achieve my ambitions despite the ongoing war.	3.5524	1.09353	71.05%	High

15	I am still able to solve my personal problems on my own despite the surrounding difficulties.	3.4535	1.16258	70.56%	High
16	I feel satisfied with my life despite the war's suffering.	3.4524	1.16575	69.05%	High
Overall Score for the Positive Thinking Domain		**3.6450**	**1.16487**	**74.16%**	**High**

Table (4) indicates that the level of **positive thinking** among university students during the war in Gaza was **high**, with percentages ranging between **77.33% and 69.05%** for items (1-16). The means ranged from **3.4524 to 3.8667**, while the **overall mean percentage** for this dimension was **74.16%**.

Additionally, the **standard deviation was low** (not exceeding **1.18**), which supports the generalizability of the results. This **high positive thinking score** reflects the psychological resilience of students and their ability to transform challenges into opportunities for growth and learning. It highlights their **capacity for perseverance and adaptability**, potentially driven by a strategic outlook beyond the immediate scope of war, fostering optimism about their surrounding reality.

These findings align with the studies of Skeik and Ahmed (2023) and Al-Qallali (2023), which emphasize that positive thinking significantly impacts academic performance and psychological well-being, demonstrating students' ability to focus on solutions and confront stress with a proactive mindset.

Table 5:
Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentages of the Level of Stress Coping Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza, Arranged in Descending Order by Level

No.	Statement	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Level
17	I feel upset when I cannot express my opinion.	3.9810	0.91223	79.62%	High
18	I experience conflicting emotions between love and hate.	3.9619	1.04377	79.24%	High
19	I feel distressed by my family's reliance on external assistance.	3.8238	1.17486	76.48%	High
20	I feel burdened by life's difficulties.	3.8048	1.10889	76.10%	High
21	I face challenges in my studies.	3.8000	1.10152	75.68%	High
22	I struggle to focus on my studies during the war.	3.7985	1.10003	75.24%	High
23	I feel lonely despite having my family around me.	3.7190	1.07255	74.38%	High
24	I feel sorrow for those around me who suffer from difficult circumstances.	3.6850	1.06369	73.70%	High
25	I experience physical health problems.	3.3000	1.14001	65.01%	Medium
26	I feel constantly exhausted.	3.2898	1.13987	64.88%	Medium

27	I feel sadness about what is happening to me during the war.	3.2736	1.13598	64.53%	Medium
28	I feel stressed due to the difficult circumstances.	3.2325	1.13382	64.22%	Medium
29	I worry about my family during this war.	3.2114	1.13200	64.00%	Medium
Overall Score for the Coping with Stress Domain		**3.6062**	**1.09686**	**71.77%**	**High**

Table (5) indicates that the level of coping with stress among university students during the war in Gaza was high for items (17-24), with percentage scores ranging between 79.62% and 73.70% and mean values between 3.4880 and 3.6850. However, it was moderate for items (25-29), with percentage scores between 65.01% and 64.00% and means ranging from 3.3000 to 3.2114. The overall percentage score for this domain was 71.77%, reflecting a relatively high level of coping abilities among students.

The low standard deviation (≤1.17) indicates the consistency of responses, suggesting that students generally displayed effective psychological and emotional adaptation during the war. Their ability to manage stress positively reflects their sense of responsibility, perseverance, and resilience, which contributed to their ability to continue their lives despite the adversities.

These results are in agreement with the findings of Qubaisi (2022) and Zuhaika (2022), which emphasize that coping strategies help individuals regulate stress through skill development and adopting positive mindsets, ultimately mitigating the impact of stress on both personal and professional life.

4. Stressful Events Confrontation Dimension

Table 6:
Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentages of the Level of Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza, Arranged in Descending Order by Level

No.	Statement	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Level
30	I wish for the unpleasant situation to end by any means.	3.9100	1.21518	78.20%	High
31	I express my distress to those who caused the problem.	3.8200	1.22582	76.40%	High
32	I try to keep my feelings to myself.	3.8100	1.18658	76.20%	High
33	I have changed and grown into someone who behaves better.	3.8005	1.18465	75.42%	High
34	I realized I brought this problem upon myself.	3.7652	1.17936	74.68%	High
35	I try to forget all the bad or disturbing things.	3.6900	1.17804	73.80%	High
36	I try not to tell others about bad things.	2.9874	1.16258	64.69%	Medium
37	I feel that the situation has made me stronger than before.	2.9548	1.16158	64.25%	Medium
38	I seek advice from people I respect.	2.9457	1.60987	63.87%	Medium

39	I tried to forget everything related to the situation.	2.9422	1.16084	63.29%	Medium
40	I tried not to cut off options and kept all possibilities open.	2.9365	1.16000	62.35%	Medium
41	I focus my efforts on what I should do next.	2.9214	1.15987	62.00%	Medium
42	I receive empathy and understanding from someone.	2.9200	1.15875	61.87%	Medium
Overall Score for the Coping with Stressful Events Domain		**3.3387**	**1.21100**	**69.00%**	**High**

It is clear from Table (6) that the level of confronting stressful events among university students during the Gaza war was high for items (30-35), with percentage scores ranging from 78.20% to 73.80% and mean values between 3.9100 and 3.6900. The scores were moderate for items (36-42), with percentages ranging from 64.69% to 61.87%, and mean values between 2.9548 and 2.9200. The overall percentage score for this domain was 69.00%, which indicates a moderate to high level of ability in confronting stressful events. The standard deviation for this domain was also low, not exceeding 1.60, suggesting that the results can be generalized.

The high level of confronting stressful events during the Gaza war reflects the students' ability to handle the difficult circumstances arising from the war effectively, allowing them to face these events positively despite the extreme pressures. This demonstrates a strong will to challenge the war's circumstances and the stressors and traumatic events it produces, which enables them to continue life with a positive outlook. These findings align with the results of Skeik and Ahmad (2023) and Qubaisi

(2022), which emphasize that through adopting appropriate coping strategies such as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral coping, individuals can manage and deal with stress more effectively.

It is clear from the above that the level of positive thinking, stress coping, and confronting stressful events among university students during the Gaza war in 2023 was high, with an overall percentage of 71.64% and a mean value of 3.5299. The order of the domains was as follows: First, positive thinking, second, stress coping, and third, confronting stressful events.

This result can be explained by the fact that students in Gaza viewed the difficult circumstances as a source of challenge and resilience in the face of such extraordinary conditions. This finding aligns with the study of Abudayya et al. (2023), which suggests that this resilience can be attributed to faith-based religious beliefs, which positively impact mental health and strengthen it. This resilience may stem from values such as contentment, optimism, certainty, and holding onto the truth.

14- Results of Hypothesis Testing

1. Results related to the first hypothesis:

The first hypothesis states**:**

There is no statistically significant relationship at the significance level α = 0.05 between the levels of ***positive thinking****,* ***stress coping****, and* ***confronting stressful events*** *among university students during the Gaza war in 2023.*

Table 7:
Pearson Correlation Coefficients Examining the Relationship Between Levels of Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, and Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Coefficient Value	Significance of the Relationship
Positive Thinking	114.12	3.69	0.0191	0.028	Statistically Significant
Stress Coping	71.81	4.01			
Confrontation of Stressful Events	76.46	4.13	0.0167	0.022	Statistically

From the results presented in Table (7), it is evident that the mean score for positive thinking was (114.12) with a standard deviation of (3.69), while the mean score for stress coping was (71.81) with a standard deviation of (4.01). The Pearson correlation coefficient between these two variables was found to be (0.0191), with a significance value of (0.028). Additionally, the mean score for confronting stressful events was (76.46) with a standard deviation of (4.13), and the Pearson correlation coefficient between these two variables was (0.0167), with a significance value of (0.022). Both values were less than the 0.05 significance level.

Based on these findings, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states: There is a statistically significant correlation at the 0.05 level between the levels of positive thinking, stress coping, and confronting stressful events among university students during the Gaza war. Furthermore, the relationship is positive, as the correlation coefficient is positive, indicating that as the level of positive thinking increases, so does the ability to cope with stress and confront stressful events. In other words, the higher the level of positive thinking among the students, the greater their ability to cope with stress and confront the challenges they face during the

war. This relationship is direct, though not necessarily causal, meaning that improvements in one aspect (positive thinking) are accompanied by improvements in the other aspects (stress coping and confronting stressful events).

This finding aligns with the results of studies by Skeik & Ahmed (2023) and Al-Qalili (2023), which suggest that fostering positive thinking can have a positive impact on improving students' ability to cope with stressful events. This result can be interpreted as a sign of psychological balance, resilience, and the ability of students to face the harsh challenges and conditions they experience during the war.

2. Results Related to the Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis states:

"There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (α = 0.05) in the levels of positive thinking, stress coping, and confronting stressful events among university students during the Gaza war in 2023, attributed to the gender variable."

To determine the significance of the differences, an **independent samples T-test** was used, as shown in Table (8). The results are analyzed as follows:

Table 8:

Results of the t-Test for the Significance of Differences and the Means of Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, and Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza Attributed to Gender

Variable	Male (n = 129)		Female (n = 131)		t-Value	Significance Level (p)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Positive Thinking	4.1548	0.35698	4.1585	0.39686	0.0790	0.850
Stress Coping	4.1997	0.57485	4.2789	0.37474	-0.655	0.510
Stressful Event Confrontation	4.1557	0.42327	4.3968	0.38596	0.980	0.330
Total Score	4.1773	0.39741	4.2087	0.33772	-0.346	0.640

From Table (8), it is evident that the significance values (p-values) for the overall score of positive thinking, stress coping, and confronting stressful events among university students during the Gaza war in 2023 were (0.85, 0.51, 0.33, 0.64), respectively. Since all these values are greater than the predetermined significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

3. Results Related to the Third Hypothesis:

The Third hypothesis states:

There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ in the levels of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza that can be attributed to the age variable. To determine the significance of these differences, a One-Way ANOVA test was conducted, as shown in Table (9) below.

Table 9:
Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Significance of Differences in Levels of Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, and Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza Attributed to Age

Domain	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level
Positive Thinking	Between Groups	0.076	3	0.025	0.300	0.82
	Within Groups	8.195	256	0.084		
	Total	8.271	259			
Coping with Stress	Between Groups	0.127	3	0.082	0.265	0.64
	Within Groups	9.302	256	0.077		
	Total	10.429	259			

Coping with Stressful Events	Between Groups	0.775	3	0.258	1.795	0.15
	Within Groups	13.956	256	0.144		
	Total	14.730	259			
Overall Score	Between Groups	0.168	3	0.056	0.638	0.59
	Within Groups	8.492	256	0.088		
	Total	8.660	259			

It is evident from Table (9) that the significance values for positive thinking, stress adaptation**,** and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza, attributed to the age variable, were (0.82, 0.64, 0.15, 0.59)**.** Since these values exceed the predetermined significance level (α = 0.05)**,** the null hypothesis is not rejected.

4. Results Related to the Fourth Hypothesis:

The Fourth hypothesis states**:**

There are no statistically significant differences at the α = 0.05 significance level in positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza attributed to the academic level variable. To determine the significance of these differences, a one-way ANOVA was conducted, as presented in Table (10) below.

Table 10:
Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Significance of Differences in Levels of Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, and Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza Attributed to Academic Level

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level (p)
Positive Thinking	Between Groups	0.240	3	0.080	0.968	0.41
	Within Groups	8.030	256	0.083		
	Total	8.271	259			
Stress Coping	Between Groups	0.232	3	0.077	0.414	0.33
	Within Groups	12.197	256	0.325		
	Total	12.429	259			
Stressful Event Confrontation	Between Groups	0.567	3	0.189	1.294	0.28
	Within Groups	14.164	256	0.146		
	Total	14.730	259			
Total Score	Between Groups	0.212	3	0.071	0.812	0.49
	Within Groups	8.448	256	0.087		
	Total	8.660	259			

It is evident from Table (10) that the significance values for positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza, attributed to the academic level variable, were (0.41, 0.33, 0.28, 0.49), respectively. Since these values are greater than the predetermined significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$)**, we** fail to reject the null hypothesis**.**

5. The results related to the fifth hypothesis:

The fifth hypothesis states**:**

"There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (α = 0.05) in the level of positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza, attributed to the place of residence variable."

To determine the significance of the differences, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted, as shown in Table (11) below.

Table 11:

Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Significance of Differences in Levels of Positive Thinking, Stress Coping, and Stressful Event Confrontation Among University Students During the 2023 War on Gaza Attributed to Place of Residence

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	Significance Level (p)
Positive Thinking	Between Groups	0.178	3	0.047	0.374	0.77
	Within Groups	7.136	256	0.097		
	Total	7.425	259			
Stress Coping	Between Groups	0.469	3	0.068	0.268	0.68
	Within Groups	10.252	256	0.078		
	Total	11.485	259			
Stressful Event Confrontation	Between Groups	1.389	3	0.208	0.748	0.18
	Within Groups	12.578	256	0.107		
	Total	13.269	259			
Total Score	Between Groups	0.347	3	0.038	0.365	0.56
	Within Groups	7.658	256	0.067		
	Total	7.968	259			

It is evident from Table (11) that the significance values for positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the 2023 war on Gaza, attributed to the place of residence variable, were (0.77, 0.68, 0.18, 0.56). These values are greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that we do not reject the null hypothesis.

Thus, the results of the hypotheses related to demographic variables suggest that there are no statistically significant differences in positive thinking, stress adaptation, and coping with stressful events among university students during the war in Gaza 2023, attributed to gender, age, academic level, or place of residence.

This can be explained by the fact that all students, regardless of gender, experience war conditions in a similar manner, making gender an insignificant factor in these circumstances. Additionally, war as an extraordinary condition affects all age groups similarly, regardless of age differences. Likewise, all students, whether at the beginning of their studies or in advanced academic stages, face the same pressures and challenges associated with war, indicating a level of maturity and resilience in coping with the harsh realities imposed by the conflict. Furthermore, all students, regardless of their place of residence—whether in a city, village, or refugee camp—experience similar hardships related to war. Given that all areas in Gaza were subjected to bombings, destruction, and loss of life in a comparable manner, place of residence does not appear to influence how they cope with stress.

Based on these findings, it can be inferred that there is a sense of unity among the people of Gaza in their perception of events and their collective resilience in facing adversity. These results align with the findings of Shams (2023), which indicated that there were no differences based on major or place of residence, as well as with the study by Al-Qallali (2023), which found no differences based on gender or major. However, these results

differ from Shams (2023), which reported differences based on gender and academic level.

15- Recommendations

After presenting and discussing the findings, the researchers reached the following recommendations:

1. Psychologists and educators should consider the study's findings when designing psychosocial support programs for individuals, particularly university students in Gaza, during crises and wartime. These programs should aim to strengthen resilience and coping mechanisms while aligning with students' psychological well-being.
2. Develop specialized intervention programs for students in Gaza who experience severe trauma or psychological distress that they struggle to overcome. These programs should include individual and group counseling sessions to provide targeted psychological support.
3. Integrate curricula and programs that focus on fostering positive thinking and psychological resilience within academic courses or extracurricular activities in conflict-affected regions.
4. Encourage students in Gaza and other conflict zones who have successfully navigated their challenges with good mental health and positive coping strategies to participate in volunteer-based social initiatives. These initiatives should aim to support peers struggling to cope, enhance their sense of resilience, unity, and perseverance, and draw upon the positive experiences of those who have successfully adapted.

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