



## The effectiveness of two counseling programs (acceptance and commitment, and Logo counseling) in reducing the existential vacuum and improving life skills among widows in Riyadh

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of two counseling programs (counseling by acceptance and commitment, and Logo counseling) in reducing the existential vacuum and improving the life management skills of widows. The study sample consisted of 27 widows; they were randomly divided into 3 groups of 9 for each group: (the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, the control group).

The results of the study indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the average ranks of the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, and the control group; On the scale of the existential void in the dimensional measurement in favor of the two experimental groups, where it was in favor of the counseling group with acceptance and commitment in the total degree and subsequent feeling being connected, the differences between the two programs were equal in the other dimensions. There were statistically significant differences between the average ranks of the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, and the control group. On the scale of life management skills in the dimensional measurement in favor of the two experimental groups, it was in favor of the meaningful counseling group in the dimension of time management skills and subsequent effective communication skills, while the differences between the two programs were equal in the total score and the other dimensions. There were statistically significant differences between the average ranks of the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, and the control group. On the existential void scale in measuring follow-up in favor of the two experimental groups, no differences appeared between the two programs. Finally, there were statistically significant differences between the average ranks of the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, and the control group. On the life management skills scale in measuring follow-up in favor of the two experimental groups, there were no differences between the two programs.

**Keywords:** *acceptance and commitment, Logo counseling, existential emptiness, life management skills, widows*

## INTRODUCTION

The family and its basic components are a source of interdependence between its members, where both parents are present and play specific roles to deal with the problems of life in general, and the problems of family members in particular. Those widowed suffer from a number of psychological and social pressures. In addition to the financial difficulties and burdens of daily life, psychological pressures and some accompanying psychological disorders occur to widows, such as symptoms of depression, prolonged sadness disorder, feelings of inferiority, low self-confidence, decreased sense of social competence, weak relationships with others, decreased leisure time, permanent sadness, and feelings of social alienation, as well as problems related to future anxiety, social anxiety, poor life management skills, self-skills, high level of frustration, painful memories, feeling of inferiority, bearing individual and social responsibility, role conflict, and the daily chores they are required to do periodically for their children and others (Gerona, 2021). The end of the marital relationship resulting from widowhood leads to the destruction of the common social reality and the identity of marriage and hastening to rebuild a new reality while performing the social roles associated with widowhood, modifying the old roles associated with marriage, and trying to adapt to reality and deal with the psychological and social trauma they are exposed to as a result of their husband's death (Ogweno, 2010).

According to the Loomba Foundation (2015), which studies widows, the number of widows around the world is estimated at nearly 21 million, an increase of 9% compared to 2010, and reports issued by the United Nations (2020) stated that there are more than 258 million widows globally.

Silverman (2004) mentioned the most prominent problems faced by widows are stress and unfamiliar psychological feelings, such as a sense of psychological loneliness, loss of intimacy, confusion of psychological and societal identity, disa order of defining future direction, loss of sense of participation in the future outlook, sense of social isolation and psychological alienation. Besides the lack of a sense of psychological

emotional security, this death forces the wife to change her role to that of the widow having to deal with the grief that follows the loss; this contains at least two main components: one focuses on emotions and the other focuses on change. The emotional reactions of a widow include sadness, general malaise, depression, despair, anxiety, guilt, loneliness, turmoil and chaos. Widows also suffer from physical health problems such as insomnia, poor appetite and weight loss; social problems such as stigma, poor family support, isolation and financial vulnerability; and mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, feelings of guilt, self-blame, anger, denial, and loss of meaning from life (Lourdusamy & Caballero, 2019). Widows are more susceptible to deterioration of mental health and depression immediately after the death of the husband; when comparing married and widowed women there are differences and deterioration in mental health, among newly widowed women (Kim & Kim, 2016). Depression is associated with the loss of meaning from life (Thakur & Basu, 2010) and awareness of meaninglessness leads to the emergence of the so-called Existential Vacuum, which is "the experience that an individual goes through to lose the meaning of his life and the purpose of his personal existence, which creates a vacuum for him" (Frankl, 1984). Since widowhood is considered one of the most important issues facing women, it does not mean losing and suffering from the pain of loss only, but rather it means losing a way of life they have been accustomed to (Moses, 2021), and it is considered an emotional experience that has a cognitive and mental impact on the widow, who needs health, psychological and social support to deal with this experience (Sekgobela, Peu, & Wath, 2020).

A widow suffers from a number of problems and difficulties in her daily life, such as social pressures, life pressures, and low level of life management skills (Nargis, Muhammad, Uzma, & Saman, 2020), which makes them vulnerable to a feeling of psychological loneliness resulting from emptiness and symptoms of depression, and weakening their skills to manage their lives; therefore, programs must be provided to help them improve the life management skills they have.

There are many ways in which such cases are dealt with and help the widow deal with her problems after feeling loss, and the accompanying psychological disorders and daily suffering from these problems that dominate her life and prevent her ability to grow, develop and find psychological and social adjustment. Treatment programs and psychological and counseling interventions are numerous, such as psychological interventions based on acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy, through which the widow is trained in life management skills helping her adapt after loss, and become less aware of the psychological problems that accompany her, affording the native skills that enable her to interact positively and practice daily activities effectively.

### ***Theoretical framework and previous studies***

#### ***First: The Existential Vacuum***

The existential vacuum occurs due to the existential frustration of the individual, which is “the inner emptiness, the lack of meaning, and the feeling of losing the meaning of existence and the meaning of life” (Frankl, 1982), and it appears in many aspects, including laziness, boredom, and weak motivation, Feeling tired and exhausted, the individual becomes afraid, and flees to various types of compensation, including: work, pleasure, power, money, alcohol and drug addiction, by which the existential emptiness is literally numbed and compensated. This may happen in specific situations in a person’s practical life, when the will of meaning stimulates the individual, giving a sense of existential emptiness and leading to negative evaluation of events, conflicts in the workplace, loss of jobs and status, layoffs, and unemployment; However, all these symptoms are by no means pathological in themselves. Rather, they are normal human reactions, and suffering from existential emptiness does not mean neurosis or to be diagnosed as a clinical disorder, and, if there are significant symptoms, it falls under the name of sociogenic disorder resulting from a spiritual problem (Devivere, 2018).

#### ***Second: The life Management skills***

Women’s life management skills have been defined as “the information and values that

women need in their daily lives to adapt and coexist with the changes taking place, and gain the ability to manage themselves and their affairs in all areas of life, by exploiting their skills for success in life, and then achieving balance by satisfying all aspects. Social, material, spiritual and mental, which is reflected in the quality of her life in a positive way, and the achievement of family harmony” (Muhammad, Al-Zuhri, & Ali, 2022). It includes the life management skills of women in an integrated and intertwined framework of basic mental processes: such as skills of observation, classification, and comparison; higher mental processes: such as thinking skills, problem-solving, and decision-making; and social-emotional aspects: such as self-management and feelings, the search for happiness, successful interaction with others, and pride in national and cultural identity (Hassan & Muhammad, 2020).

#### ***Third: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy***

Acceptance and commitment therapy is referred to as a "third wave" or "new wave" of psychotherapy, with "first wave" referring to the classical conditioning and active learning-based behavioral approaches developed in the 1950s, and "second wave" therapies focusing additionally on treating information and more specifically cognitive processes as well as principles of behavioral learning. "Third wave" therapies share the basics with these earlier approaches, but extend in other directions depending on the type (Hayes, 2004). The acronym ACT embodies the three core steps or themes of this approach:

Acceptance of thoughts and feelings: Accepting and embracing thoughts and feelings, especially unwanted ones (anxiety, pain, guilt, inadequacy).

Choosing directions: This step is about helping an individual choose their life directions by identifying and focusing on what really matters to them and what they value in life.

Taking action: This step relates to committed action and includes taking steps toward achieving life goals, committing and changing what can be changed (Eifert & Forsyth, 2005).

#### ***Fourth: Logo Therapy***

This guiding therapy belongs to the "third vena" school of psychotherapy, and focuses on the meaning of human existence, and in man's search for such meaning, to find what the individual considers meaning in his life, and, according to existentialism, it is considered as the primary motivational force in man (Batthyany, 2014). Guidance in meaning is based on the meaning of life, which is considered to be a scheme and framework from which a hierarchical system of values is derived. Values provide the individual with a program of action for how to behave in life according to them .

#### ***Fifth: The Widows***

Widowhood for women is an influential transitional event in which the family institution is disintegrated by the loss of a husband accompanied by high levels of psychological distress, and difficulties in adapting to a new life without a husband. With more severe depression compared to widowers (Bharathi ; Sridevi & Kumar, 2015), one of the psychological problems that the widow suffers from is the feeling of abandonment because, after the death of her husband, her relationship with those around her changes, and they move away from her because she constitutes an additional burden and responsibility on those around her, and the feeling of psychological alienation appears, And by losing affection, she feels painful feelings that induce in her a state of non-acceptance and lack of love for others, and the feeling of personal isolation increases, which is withdrawal and unwillingness to mix with society (Khreisat,2020).

#### ***Previous Studies***

Abolfazl et al. (2022) conducted a study aimed at knowing the effectiveness of existential therapy compared to acceptance and commitment therapy for loneliness and irrational beliefs among male prisoners. The study sample consisted of 36 prisoners, distributed randomly into three groups: acceptance and commitment therapy, existential therapy group, and the control group. The results of the study indicated the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy, and existential therapy in reducing

feelings of loneliness, and there was no difference between the effectiveness of the two types of treatment among the study members.

FK et al. (2021) aimed to know the effect of meaning therapy on the meaning of life, depression, despair, and suicidal ideation in depressed patients. The study sample consisted of 86 patients in Taiwan and the findings indicated that meaning therapy had effective in raising the level of meaning of life, and reducing the degree of depression, despair and suicidal ideation among the study members.

Akbarinejhad and Faroughi (2021) also conducted a study that aimed to compare the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy in improving psychological well-being and reducing death anxiety in women with AIDS. The study sample consisted of 30 patients, randomly distributed into two groups, an experimental group and a control group. The results of the study indicated the equal effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy in raising the level of psychological well-being and reducing death anxiety. The effectiveness of the two treatments was found in training patients on conscious acceptance skills and dealing with death anxiety; which helped the study subjects in dealing with the disease better.

Badr's (2021) study also aimed to find out the effectiveness of a group counseling program based on acceptance and commitment therapy in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy for a group of divorced Saudi women. The results of the study indicated the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy, with continued effectiveness of improvement in the study members after three months.

The ovaries and circumcisions (2020) conducted a study aimed at finding out the effectiveness of a counseling program based on existential therapy in developing tolerance and reducing the existential void among late children. The study sample consisted of 18 married women; the results of the study indicated the effectiveness of existential therapy in developing tolerance and reducing the degree of the existential void of the study members.

Ismail's study (2020) aimed to identify the effectiveness of a counseling program based on meaning therapy for the development of time management and its relationship to self-efficacy among a sample of 21 Majmaah University students. The results of the study indicated the effectiveness of meaning therapy in developing the ability to manage time, with continued effectiveness of improvement after the two-month follow-up period for the study members.

Keskin (2020) conducted a study aimed at knowing the effect of meaning therapy on depression, anxiety, emotional personality and quality of life in patients with MS. The study sample consisted of 10 female patients between the ages of 18-49 years, who did not suffer from poor verbal communication or mental or organic problems. The results of the study indicated that meaning therapy was effective in reducing the degree of depression and improving the quality of life of the study members.

Titi et al. (2018) conducted a study with the aim of knowing the effect of meaning therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and family psychoeducation on self-stigma and depression in housewives living with HIV (AIDS). The results of the study indicated that acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy were effective in reducing self-stigma and depression in the study subjects.

Azimi et al. (2018) compared the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy on symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress in women with relapsing multiple sclerosis. The study sample consisted of 45 women, randomly distributed into three groups: acceptance and commitment therapy, meaning therapy and the control group. The results of the study indicated that acceptance and commitment therapy and meaning therapy are effective in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and tension, and the effectiveness of the two treatments continued positively for three months, and no difference was observed between the two types of treatment.

Covington (2018) conducted a study aimed at identifying the feelings of sadness and loss experienced by widows who lost their husbands and underwent psychological counseling to

address the impact for a period of 12 to 48 months before the start of the study. The study sample consisted of eight widows aged between 21-80 years in the US state of North Carolina. The results of the study indicated that widows seek psychological counseling because of the perceived need for guidance or assistance in dealing with the new situation resulting from the loss of a husband, and that psychological counseling is useful when it facilitates or allows the widow to share her emotions and feelings with others and enables her to overcome this loss and nourish her personal growth.

Gerges (1998) aimed to identify the effectiveness of a counseling program based on meaning therapy to reduce the level of neuroticism and existential emptiness among university students.

### ***Study Questions and Problems***

Given the results of previous studies indicated that widows suffer from social pressures, multiple psychological problems, and the multiplicity of treatment methods and programs offered to reduce the degree of these disorders in this group, the problem of the current study is focused on answering the following questions:

What are the differences between the control and experimental groups in reducing the existential void and improving life management skills after applying two programs based on counseling with acceptance, commitment and Logo counseling?

What are the differences between the two experimental groups in reducing the existential void before and after the application of two programs based on counseling with acceptance and commitment and Logo counseling?

What are the differences between the two experimental groups in improving life management skills before and after applying two programs based on counseling with acceptance and commitment and Logo counseling?

What are the differences between the two experimental groups in reducing the existential vacuum and improving life management skills after applying the two programs and after a period of time from applying the two programs?

## METHODOLOGY

### *The study population and its sample*

The population consisted of all widows in the city of Riyadh, numbered 69,432 widows according to the statistics of the Saudi General Authority for Statistics (2017), and the study sample consisted of 27 widows, who lost their husbands as a result of death and did not remarry, with different causes and duration of widowhood. They were chosen in an intentional way after 2853 reviews (widows) of the Ayami Association for the Care of Widows and Divorcees in the city of Riyadh were counted during the period of observation of the center, which extended for three months before the application of the study. The two scales (existential vacuum, life management skills) were applied to 70 widows, and 37 widows obtained high degrees of existential vacuum (52.8%), and 40 widows obtained low degrees of life management skills (57.1%). The number of widows who obtained a high degree in the existential vacuum and a low degree in life management skills had 30 widows with a rate of 42.8%, and the number of those who agreed to join the program was 27 widows with a rate of 38.5%, while three widows (4.2%) refused to join the training programs due to their special circumstances; the final study sample amounted to 27 widows who were randomly distributed into two experimental groups (acceptance and commitment therapy, meaning therapy) and a control group with nine widows for a group to complete the design used in the study.

### *B. Scale*

#### *Existential emptiness scale*

The multidimensional emptiness sense scale prepared by Demirtas (2018), consisting of 27 items distributed over four dimensions, was used. The psychometric properties of the tool were verified by applying it to a sample of university students according to a number of variables. Cronbach's alpha stability coefficient was 0.90, and the tool was corrected according to the heptagonal Likert method (0: does not apply to at all, 1: applies to a little, 2: Applies to some of the time 3: Applies to half the time, 4: Applies to me a lot, 5: Applies to most of the time, 6: Applies to all the time), with test scores ranging from 0-162, and the correction was reversed in the case of negative expressions, and the psychological

characteristics were verified in the current study by translating the scale into the current study environment, calculating the tool's internal consistency validity coefficients (.914\*\* - .939\*\*), and calculating Cronbach's alpha stability values (.801; .684). ; .715; .837, respectively). The Cronbach's alpha stability value for the tool as a whole was .758, and this confirms the validity and importance of the tool.

#### *Life management skills scale*

The life management skills scale applied in the Egyptian environment and prepared by Mansour, Demerdash, and Shend (2015) was used. The scale consisted of 57 phrases distributed over six dimensions: time management skills (12) items, stress management skills (7) paragraphs, decision-making skills (7) paragraphs, effective communication skills (11) paragraphs, team work skills (11) paragraphs, continuous self-learning skills (9) paragraphs. It is answered using a 5-point Likert scale, (ranging from Very agree to Very disagree. The highest score that could be obtained was 285, which means a high level of life management skills, while the lowest score that could be obtained (57) means a low level of life management skills. In the current study, the psychological characteristics of the tool were verified, as the stability coefficients of the tool ranged between .750 - .778, respectively, and the value of Cronbach's alpha stability for the tool as a whole was .605. The values of the internal consistency coefficients between the dimensions of the scale ranged between .710\*\* - .905\*\*, and between the dimensions of the scale and the total score between .649\*\* - .863\*\*; this confirms the validity and importance of the scale.

#### *Counseling program based on acceptance and commitment therapy*

The counseling program consisted of 15 sessions, the duration of each session was 60 minutes, twice a week, for a period of seven consecutive weeks. A number of guiding techniques have been adopted upon which guidance is based on acceptance and commitment, such as: lecture, discussion and dialogue, homework, formal sanity exercises, sky and weather training, tug of war training, and Chinese finger trap training.

Ten minutes training is the best training of values, goals, and procedures, training both sides of the paper, training the miracle question as an alternative), after referring to a number of references and previous studies such (Badr, 2021; Bennett & Oliver, 2019; Titi et al., 2018).

reconstruction, analysis with meaning, feedback, table of meaning, method of common denominators, which were adopted after referring to a number of references and studies (Moawad & Muhammad, 2021; Mohammadi, Fard, & Heidari, 2014; ovaries and circumcisions, 2020).

***The counseling program is based on treatment in the sense***

The counseling program consisted of 16 sessions, and the duration of each session was 60 minutes, twice a week, for a period of eight consecutive weeks. There were a number of guiding techniques on which guidance is based on meaning, such as: lecture, discussion and dialogue, homework, allegory, situational

**RESULTS**

The differences between the mean ranks of the counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy group, counseling based on meaning therapy group, and the control group on the existential void scale in the post-measurement.

**TABLE 1:** The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for the post-measurement of the groups (the counseling group with acceptance and commitment, the counseling group with meaning, the control group) on the existential void scale.

Dimension	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean rank	df	Kruskal-Wallis	sig
The total score of the existential void scale	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	52.67	7.97	6.61	2	19,86	0.00
	Logo counseling	9	59.67	4.44	12.39			
	control group	9	115.44	11.73	23.00			
Isense inner Emptiness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	13.44	3.75	7.78	2	18,1	0.00
	Logo counseling	9	16.11	2.52	11.28			
	control group	9	31.89	6.49	22.94			
Sense Spiritual Emptiness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	16.89	2.93	9.94	2	17.62	0.00
	Logo counseling	9	16.22	2.95	09.06			
	control group	9	34.44	9.48	23.00			
Sense of Absence of Relatedness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	15.44	2.55	7.17	2	14,16	0.00
	Logo counseling	9	18.56	2.24	13.67			
	control group	9	31.11	9.77	21.17			
sense of meaninglessness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	6.89	1.76	7.83	2	15,39	0.00
	Logo counseling	9	8.78	2.17	12.33			
	control group	9	18.00	7.62	21.83			

Table 1 shows the average ranks for the performance of the members of the different groups on the existential void scale and the dimensions in the dimensional measurement, with statistical significance at 0.001. This means that there are differences in the performance of group members on the existential void scale as a result of receiving training in treatment skills during a specific period of time. The Mann-Whitney test was also used to determine the direction of differences in the pairwise comparisons between the two groups of treatment programs (acceptance and commitment, and treatment with meaning), and it was found that there were statistically significant differences between the two types of treatment methods used in the average ranks of widows on the existential void scale. The differences were in

favor of the training skills of the counseling program based on existential therapy compared to the counseling program based on acceptance and commitment therapy. A comparison was made between the average ranks of the groups and it was found that there were statistically significant differences in favor of the counseling group based on acceptance and commitment, and there were differences in favor of counseling based on acceptance and commitment. Sense therapy was compared to the control group.

The differences between the mean ranks of the groups (counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy; counseling based on meaning therapy) and the control group on the life management skills scale in the post-measurement.

**TABLE 2:** The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for the post-measurement of the groups on the life management skills scale.

Dimension	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean rank	df	Kruskal-Wallis	sg
Overall score for life management skills scale	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	213.22	16.11	16.78	2	18.27	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	231.78	20.63	20.22			
	control group	9	134.44	22.90	5.00			
Time-management skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	41.67	5.27	14.33	2	18.69	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	49.22	5.12	21.89			
	control group	9	29.22	9.82	5.78			
Pressure management skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	26.89	3.86	17.22	2	13.40	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	27.33	3.71	18.61			
	control group	9	17.44	4.72	6.17			
Decision-making skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	29.11	4.51	16.50	2	17.25	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	31.22	3.99	20.17			
	control group	9	17.44	4.25	5.33			
Effective communication skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	38.67	3.50	15.28	2	15.99	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	42.33	4.44	20.72			
	control group	9	24.00	8.29	6.00			
Social work skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	41.78	3.73	17.06	2	17.11	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	44.11	3.72	19.72			
	control group	9	26.89	7.93	5.22			
Continuous self-learning skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	35.11	04.01	16.67	2	14.07	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	37.56	4.85	19.28			
	control group	9	19.44	7.99	06.06			



It is evident from Table 2 that there are statistically significant differences between the groups (in the average ranks of widows' scores on the life management skills scale. They were statistically significant for all dimensions of the life management skills scale and the total score, which amounted to 18.27; 18.69; 13.40; 17.25; 15.99; 17.11; 14.07, respectively. This means the effectiveness of treatment programs in the post-measurement of widows, as the performances were distinguished between the three groups. To determine the direction of the differences, the Mann-Whitney test was used, and it was found that there were statistically significant differences between counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy group (and the counseling based on meaning therapy group in the average ranks of widows on all dimensions of the life management skills scale and the total score of the tool. Differences were in favor of the training skills of the counseling program based

on existential therapy compared to the counseling program based on acceptance and commitment therapy. A comparison was made between the average ranks of the counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy group and the counseling based on meaning therapy group with the average ranks of the control group, and it was found that there were statistically significant differences in favor of the counseling group based on acceptance and commitment, and there were differences in favor of counseling based on acceptance and commitment. Sense therapy compared to the control group.

The differences between the mean ranks of the counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy group, counseling based on meaning therapy group, and the control group on the existential void scale in the follow-up measurement.

**TABLE 3:** The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences in the follow-up measurement for the groups on the existential void scale.

Dimension	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean rank	df	Kruskal-Wallis	sg
The total score of the existential void scale	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	67.00	17.71	8.22	2	17.93	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	76.22	14.39	10.78			
	control group	9	115.44	11.73	23.00			
Isense inner Emptiness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	19.11	4.43	9.22	2	12.90	0.002
	Logo counseling	9	21.00	4.50	11.11			
	control group	9	31.89	6.49	21.672			
Sense Spiritual Emptiness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	20.11	3.79	8.942	2	14.14	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	21.56	3.21	11.06			
	control group	9	34.44	9.48	22.00			
Sense of Absence of Relatedness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	19.67	8.23	9.11	2	6.86	0.032
	Logo counseling	9	23.33	4.15	14.00			
	control group	9	31.11	9.77	18.89			
sense of meaninglessness	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	8.11	2.93	8.67	2	10.90	0.004
	Logo counseling	9	10.33	3.97	12.61			
	control group		18.00	7.62	20.72			

It is clear from Table 3 that there are statistically significant differences between the counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy groups and the counseling based on meaning therapy groups and the control group in the average ranks of widows on the existential void scale and its dimensions. Statistical significance of the total degree and dimensions WAS 17.93; 12.90; 14.14; 6.86; 10.90, respectively, which means the continuity of the effectiveness of psychological counseling programs in general compared to the control group in the follow-up measurement in reducing the feeling of existential emptiness among widows. The Mann-Whitney test was also used to determine the direction of differences in comparisons between groups (admission and commitment counseling, and meaning counseling). It was found that there were statistically significant differences between the

two groups in the average ranks of widows on the scale of the existential void in measuring follow-up, with these differences in favor of the group that applied counseling skills based on meaning therapy compared to the group that applied counseling skills based on meaning. On the treatment with acceptance and commitment, a comparison was made between the average ranks of the counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy and the (counseling based on treatment with meaning groups with the average ranks of the control group. These were in favor of Sense Therapy-based counseling compared to the control group.

The differences between the mean ranks of the counseling with acceptance and commitment and Logo counseling groups and the control group on the life management skills scale in the follow-up measurement.

**TABLE 4:** The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test for differences in measuring follow-up for the groups on the life management skills scale.

Dimension	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean rank	df	Kruskal-Wallis	sg
The overall for the life management skills scale	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	218.78	21.37	17.44	2	17.77	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	224.89	19.54	19.56			
	control group	9	134.44	22.90	5.00			
Time-management skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	44.44	5.59	16.00	2	16.80	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	48.22	5.45	20.442			
	control group	9	29.22	9.82	5.56			
Pressure management skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	27.00	2.92	18.11	2	13.32	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	27.22	3.60	17.72			
	control group	9	17.44	4.72	6.17			
Decision-making skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	29.89	2.89	19.11	2	17.58	0.000
	Logo counseling	9	29.11	2.57	17.89			
	control group	9	17.44	4.25	5.00			
Effective communication skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	38.56	5.25	17.83	2	13.83	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	39.11	03.02	18.17			
	control group	9	24.00	8.29	6.00			
Social work skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	43.44	7.73	17.50	2	14.67	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	43.89	6.53	18.72			
	control group	9	26.89	7.93	5.78			
Continuous self-learning skills	Counseling with acceptance and commitment	9	35.44	4.42	16.89	2	13.02	0.001
	Logo counseling	9	37.22	3.35	18.78			
	control group	9	19.44	7.99	6.33			

It is clear from Table 4 that there are statistically significant differences between the counseling group in the sense and the control group in the average ranks of widows on the life management skills scale and its dimensions in measuring follow-up, as the value of Kruskal-Wallis for the total degree and dimensions were statistically significant (17.77; 16.80); 13.32; 17.58; 13.83; 14.67; 13.02, respectively). This indicates the continuity of the impact of counseling programs in improving the life management skills of widows compared to the control group. The Mann-Whitney test was used to determine the direction of differences in comparisons between groups (admission and commitment counseling, and meaning counseling). It was found that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in the average ranks of widows on the life management skills scale, as the value of (z) in the total degree and dimensions was 0.84; 1.55; 0.17; 0.49; 0.08; 0.39; 0.81, respectively, and non-functional at the 0.05 level. This indicates the equality and continuity of the impact of the two extension programs (counseling by acceptance and commitment, and Logo counseling) in improving the life management skills of widows.

## DISCUSSION

Through the theoretical framework and previous studies, it became clear the effectiveness of counseling based on acceptance and commitment and counseling based on meaning therapy in reducing the existential vacuum and improving the quality of life for widows (Badr, 2021; FK et al., 2021). The suffering they are going through is a result of losing their husband, and their feeling of loneliness and sadness is related to the loss of the person on whom they relied in many aspects of their life. Counseling based on acceptance and commitment helped the widows to accept suffering and circumstances in which they live and their positive and negative experiences, which increased their psychological flexibility. This is consistent with what Luoma, Hayes, and Walser (2017) who stated that the individual's increased acceptance of their circumstances and the persistent thoughts in their mind, and their struggle with symptoms leads to an increase in their psychological resilience.

Guidance in this sense helped widows accept their circumstances and view them as not suffering, but rather as an experience that helps them reach the meaning of their lives, which is consistent with what was mentioned by Maamariya (2021) that widows go through suffering they cannot get rid of, but the suffering ceases to be suffering in a way, which is the moment when suffering acquires meaning, such as the meaning of sacrifice. It also supports what Frankl (1982) said that when an individual finds himself in an inevitable situation, then he must face what cannot be changed, so he has an opportunity to achieve the highest value and to achieve the deeper meaning of life, which is the meaning of suffering. Suffering cannot have meaning unless it is absolutely necessary and indispensable. This result is also consistent with Badr (2021) that counseling based on acceptance and commitment helped reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy, which are variables related to existential emptiness. Thakur and Basu (2010) stated that depression is associated with a loss of meaning from life. Awareness of non-meaning leads to the emergence of the so-called existential emptiness. The result in the dimension of sense of Absence of Relatedness is also consistent with the study of Hassanein (2020) that acceptance and commitment therapy is effective in reducing avoidant personality disorder; which positively affected the attitude of the sample toward life. The researcher explained this result in that the dimension of sense of Absence of Relatedness means the widow's feeling of lack of connection with others, and distance from social relationships, and it was noted that there are many wrong ideas and beliefs such as: that she is not part of the society in which she lives; or that she is a burden to those around her; or that she is an unpopular or undesirable person; or that the women around her fear that their husbands will marry a widow because the widow may want to marry anyone who can help her shoulder these responsibilities. 2014), including avoiding professional activities that require friction with others; refusing to engage with people unless she is certain that she will be loved. The result of this study also agrees with the study of Ismail (2020).

The counseling program based on acceptance and commitment counseling and meaning-based counseling were effective in improving the life management skills of the members of the two experimental groups compared to the control group. Increasing her ability to stay connected to the present moment, and appearing in the present includes raising awareness of internal and external experiences as it occurs at the present time with the widow, which would enhance a value-based life by increasing the psychological resilience of the widow (Luoma, Hayes, & Walser, 2017). Guidance by meaning is based on finding meaning from life, which is considered to be a scheme and framework from which a hierarchical system of values is derived. Values provide the widow with a program of work for how to behave in life according to them

This result can be explained by the fact that the two programs have contributed to improving the level of life management skills for widows, by setting specific steps and exercises to be implemented by the widow, based on the values taken from the meaning of life for them, which contributed to the improvement of their level in life management skills. This result also agrees with the study of Ismail (2020) that meaning therapy is effective in developing the skill of time management. Plan (2015) mentions that improving the individual's relationship with others, and emphasizing that the extent of the meaning of the human personality is always related to the environment in which the individual lives. The researcher explained this result in that meaningful counseling has contributed to improving the widow's relationship with others, through exercises that help develop effective communication skills, and time-management skills are among the skills that are affected by the experiences of others, as each person has his own style and way of managing time. And through the counseling sessions, the researcher found that the widow seeks to gain experiences from the experiences of other widows, and since Logo counseling helps to increase her communication through some methods and techniques such as the art of the symbolic story, or the method of meeting someone, which helped to have counseling with more meaning. The findings showed

effectiveness of counseling with acceptance and commitment in improving subsequent time-management skills and effective communication skills.

### ***The Limitation***

The limitations of this pilot study are represented in its variables (counseling based on acceptance and commitment, Logo counseling, existential vacuum, life management skills) conducted on widows in the city of Riyadh, who frequented the Ayami Association for the Care of Widows and Divorced Women in Riyadh and agreed to participate in the current study. After observing the number of women who attended the association for a period of time, i.e. three months, this study was conducted during the winter of 2022 for a period of three months. The tools were applied after checking their psychological characteristics; therefore, generalization of the results is limited to the category in which this study was conducted.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of the study, the following can be recommended:

Benefiting from the current counseling study programs (counseling based on acceptance and commitment therapy, and counseling based on treatment with meaning) in reducing the existential vacuum and improving widows' life management skills and publishing it in all private associations concerned with providing services for the care of widows and divorced women.

Implementation of psychological support programs for newly widowed women, which contributes to reducing the psychological impact of losing a husband.

Providing psychological and counseling services to the families of widows; In order to enhance their psychological and social role in reducing psychological problems in society.

Holding workshops on training and rehabilitating widows, to help them with psychological adjustment through acceptance and commitment programs.

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