Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Quality of Life for Youth in Jordan

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to construct a scale to measure QOL for youth in Jordan. The study sample consisted of (630) university students (Males and Females) that are enrolled in scientific and humanitarian specializations at both of University of Jordan and Al-Balqa Applied University. The researchers developed a scale to measure QOL, which includes (43) items; categorized based on (7) dimensions (emotional life, social life, family life and habitat, public health and daily jobs, luxury, religious life, and technological facilities). The results revealed that there are statistical differences of QOL according to gender and resident place variables while statistical differences of QOL for the university specialization variable.

Keywords: Scale construction, QOL, youth in Jordanian society.

1. Introduction

The modern century is undergoing many social, economic, and life style evolutions especially for youth. These accelerated evolutions are affecting Arab youth as they are trying to cope with these accelerated changes whether they are good or bad to their physical and mental health. Individuals, societies, and nations have been trying to achieve the desired level of life quality since the beginning of time as this aspect pose direct positive effects on the individual's physical and mental health (Costanza et al., 2007). Evaluating an individual's life experience must include the assessment of his/her QOL, as it is important in achieving the desired type of life.

Modern technology is considered to be one of the main factors affecting individuals' lives in many dimensions; such as; business, families, and culture. It also poses direct effect on the individual's life quality (Yu, 2011); internet affects on the life style of each individual in modern time (Gates, 2000). Almost everyone is using the internet to shop and learn new things (Wang, Yeh & Jiang, 2006). Many researchers have tried to study the effects of internet on individuals' life styles by considering various dimensions; the relation between QOL and available facilities (Thompson & Kaminski, 1993), the effect of shopping on life quality (Swinyard & Smith, 2003), or on the individual's health (Shek et al., 2005). Most of these studies adopted methods that were previously used in other studies without measuring their psychometric characteristics, knowing that, finding validity and reliability coefficients are of the most important steps before adopting and accrediting a certain scale or study results.

The QOL differs according to time and it is essentially affected by environmental and cultural circumstances along with the individual's interests. This term is known to be of multiple components and relations; it is used in many researches by being linked to other terms; such as; life satisfaction, well-being, or happiness (McDougall et al., 2015; Diener & Tay 2015). In general, the QOL for youth is considered to be based on various dimensions concerned with their personal traits and the surrounding environment variables; such as; independency, satisfaction, physical and mental health, social and economic status, surrounding environment, ability to perform noble activities, social biding, and

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cultural factors. Titman et al. (1997) pointed out that it is difficult to come up with an agreed upon definition for life quality, as it is linked to every aspect of life and every science.

The world health organization (WHO) defined the QOL as the individual's awareness for his/her position in life, while, considering the cultural and traditional values for the place of residence and the ability to respond to the expectations, interests, and standards of the community. Therefore, it is a wide ranged term of interconnected dimensions that are affected by various factors such as; physical and mental health, independency, social relations and other environmental factors (Edwards et al., 2003). Life quality as a term assembles and combines the individual's personal and mental needs (Costanza et al., 2007).

Current studies focus on measuring the QOL according to two main dimensions; economic level which represents the level of achieving needed life needs, and social level which focuses on achieving happiness and pleasure (Subjective well-being). Subjective well-being includes both emotional and knowledge dimensions. Therefore, the more the individual is satisfied about his/her emotional life and knowledge, the better life quality is assured (Easterlin, 2003). Costanza et al. (2007) pointed out that when we talk about quality of life we have to consider two main dimensions; objectives, which include how much the individual can achieve his financial needs, and subjective indicators, which include the personal levels, related to the individual's personal goals and mental health. When the individual is more capable of constriction and organizing his interconnected personal life (work, family, friends, and mental and physical health), then he will have a better QOL (Sirgy, 2002).

Fallowfield (1990) documented the indicators to achieve the desired QOL as follows:

- The feel of QOL: it is the feeling of being able to achieve the desired needs and to enjoy the surrounding environment.

- Mental indicators: it can be seen in the individual's feelings of anxiety and depression or sickness or happiness and satisfaction.

- Social indicators: it can be seen through the types of personal relations and social activities.

- Career indicators: it can be seen through the individual's satisfaction about his/her work and the ability to perform the required duties.

- Physical indicators: it can be seen through the individual's health overall status.

- Happiness indicators: these are related to the individual's happiness towards his/her life (Costanza et al., 2007).

QOL includes various terms such as; happiness, self-satisfaction, and positive feelings as noted by the behavioral actions that show the high levels of self-satisfaction and continuous search for personal valuable goals and social networking (Fallowfield, 1991). QOL also refers to the integration between many dimensions in an individual's life whether physical, social or mental, and including Cognitive Comportment, Life Satisfaction, and Emotional Comportment (Rubin & Peyrot, 2000). This term also refers to pleasure and satisfaction feelings, which are affected by life events, and emotions; also, the relation between evaluating life quality is affected by the individual's perspective (Reine et al., 2003).

From the previously mentioned terms, it is noticed that there is no agreement among researchers regarding the definition of QOL, but it is fair to say that it is a wide ranged term in which life satisfaction is an essential part of it. In addition, this definition is not included in a specific theory, which makes studies assess QOL, and indicate the factors affecting it without reaching a final definition.

Researchers have been trying to assess QOL and determine suitable measures, as this term is the most recent evolution in an issue that has been negotiable since the beginning of time. Constriction a scale to measure QOL must include an assessment of the individual's self-expertise whether this assessment is self-oriented or by others (Schalock, Bonham & Verdugo, 2008). Considering that communities have different life styles according to the environment and that life quality is directly related to the financial status of individuals, and also that youth during university level seek to achieve the desired life quality; this study aims to evaluate and build a scale that includes special dimension of youth lives in the Jordanian community as this community is related to religion, social environment, and special youth cultural habits.

1.1 Measuring Quality of Life

Construction a scale to measure QOL is based on finding the psychometric characteristics of the scale items along with the scale dimensions and the researcher's own definition of QOL (Gill & Feinstein, 1994). In addition, the assessment and measurement process depends on the methodology adopted in the research (Kind 2005; Feeny 2005) even though there is no specific definition of QOL (Lauer, 1999). Most studies depend on five social and personal dimensions while measuring QOL; health (mental and physical), career independency, social activities, community and family support, home, and environment (Bowling 1995; Cardona et al., 2003; Farquhar 1995; Gabriel and Bowling 2004; Wiggings et al., 2004), also, defining items for the five dimensions includes items concerned with measuring pain, mental health, knowledge deterioration, work capabilities, beliefs, emotions, social support, and the type of the surrounding environment (Elosua, 2011). Most of the scales that measure QOL rely on the individual's personal social, mental, spiritual, economic, and family dimension, while, others concentrate on athletic, mental and spiritual dimensions (Lucy et al., 2015).

Most of the scales that measure QOL must include two main dimensions; Subjective and Objective (Lauer, 1999). Most of the studies relied on measuring subjectivity but it was hard for them to measure objectivity (Ranzijn & Luszcz, 2000), because these subjective information depend on the general profile of the individual (Elosua, 2011), while, for objectivity; many researchers adopted the qualitative method such as; steered and non-steered interviews while measuring the dimensions of this term (Nilsson et al., 1996; Wilhelmson et al., 2005). Even though these two dimensions are very important, many studies haven't considered religious and social privacy dimensions for QOL in general and for youth in specific. This study aims to define the dimension of QOL based on Jordanian social privacy.

1.2 Problem Statement

The researchers believe that Jordanian youth QOL especially during university level and their pursue to achieve a specific life style that ensures their social, personal, and economic needs are satisfied especially with the demographic changes in Jordan as a result of the Syrian crisis as Jordan hosts more than two millions Syrian refugees and also the increasing number of university graduates, and the decrease in work potentials and opportunities. Also, the difference between Jordanian community and other Arab communities especially in religious, social, and cultural dimensions; this study aims to construct a scale to assess QOL of youth in the Jordanian community relying on suitable psychometric characteristics.

1.3 Study questions

- 1- What are the psychometric properties for the Jordanian QOL youth scale?
- 2- Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian QOL youth that can be attributed to students' gender?
- 3- Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian QOL youth that can be attributed to students' place of residence?
- 4- Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian QOL youth that can be attributed to students' university specialization?

2. Methodology

The researchers adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches to construct the study instrument in which they relied mainly on the study sample responses regarding the scale items.

2.1 Sample

A pilot study sample of (60) students (males and females) was selected in order to construct the study items. An experimental sample of (630) students (males and females) from Al Balqa Applied University and the University of Jordan was chosen in order to identify the suitable psychometric characteristics for the scale, in which, the researchers

considered the different majors whether scientific or humanitarian in both universities.

2.2 Instrument Construction Procedure

1- An open question stating, "what are the factors that affect the QOL from your point of view?" was addressed to an observational sample of (60) students. Then, the answers were gathered with a repetition percent of (0.70) and above as a limit to choose the scale item.

2- Previous studies theoretical approaches were reviewed, such as; WHOQOL scale which the WHO developed in the year (2014), AC- QOL scale that was developed by Elwick et al. (2010) and used Polinder et al. (2004).

3- (82) items were developed according to the pilot sample results, previous scales, and life quality theoretical approach. The items were constructed in a easy to comprehend way and were characterized into eight primary dimensions (emotional life, social life, family life and residence, public health and daily jobs, economic life, luxury, religious life, and technology) as follows:

- Emotional life dimension: 10 items (1-10).
- Social life dimension: 13 items (11-23).
- Family life and residence dimension: 10 items (24-33).
- Public health and daily jobs dimension: 10 items (34-43).
- Economic life dimension: 7 items (44-50).
- Luxury dimension: 13 items (51-63).
- Religious life dimension: 8 items (64-71).
- Technological facilities dimension: 9 items (72-80).

3. Results and Discussion

To answer the first question "What are the psychometric properties for the Jordanian QOL youth scale?" validity and reliability coefficients were calculated for the study instrument as follows:

First: Validity Coefficient: The researchers conducted the followings in order to ensure validity:

1- Content Validity: the study instrument was presented to (10) specialized reviewers in the fields of measuring and assessment and psychology education in both universities included in the study in order to ensure that the items are strongly related to the study subject and to have easy to comprehend items as well. Each reviewer was asked to provide his professional opinion regarding the items' linguistic clarity, suitability, and their relation to the desired dimension. Few items were edited and re-written by the reviewers and two items were deleted from the emotional dimension (I can express sadness and happiness towards others and I often feel happy than sad). Therefore, the scale included (80) primarily items.

2- Discriminate Validity: in this phase, discriminatory indicators were verified for the scale items by applying the study instrument on a sample of (630) students. The correlation coefficient was calculated for each item with (α = 0.05) as the level of significance. Table (1) lists the correlation coefficients.

Item	Correlation Items	Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation
No	with Dimensions	No	Items with	No	Items with	No	Items with
			Dimensions		Dimensions		Dimensions
1	*0.732	21	*0,399	41	*0,653	61	0,154
2	0,164	22	0,156	42	*0,709	62	0,163
3	*0,536	23	*0,565	43	*0,565	63	*0,566
4	*0,933	24	*0,565	44	0,136	64	*0,744
5	*0,803	25	*0,666	45	0,103	65	*0,535

Table (1). Item Correlation Coefficients with All Dimensions of QOL Scale

Item	Correlation Items	Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation	Item	Correlation
No	with Dimensions	No	Items with	No	Items with	No	Items with
			Dimensions		Dimensions		Dimensions
6	*0,655	26	*0,703	46	0,136	66	*0,702
7	0,125	27	*0,635	47	0,130	67	0,111
8	*0,706	28	*0,646	48	0,102	68	*0,501
9	*0,643	29	*0,699	49	0,199	69	*0,703
10	*0,698	30	0,201	50	*0,163	70	*0,556
11	*0,554	31	*0,670	51	*0,825	71	*0,713
12	*0,763	32	*0,739	52	0,165	72	*0,623
13	*0,566	33	*0,656	53	*0,566	73	*0,565
14	*0,765	34	0,188	54	*0,699	74	*0,490
15	0,196	35	*0,636	55	*0,705	75	*0,701
16	0,135	36	0,196	56	*0,753	76	*0,735
17	*0,752	37	*0,832	57	0,188	77	*0,446
18	*0,632	38	0,185	58	*0,448	78	*0,399
19	*0,365	39	*0,366	59	*0,561	79	*0,465
20	0,135	40	*0,786	60	0,160	80	0,166

Table (1) shows that there is a statistical link between the item and the overall score for (56) items out of (80). (24) Items were deleted including the economic level dimension. Table (2) lists the deleted items.

	Tuble (2). The Hellis Deleted According to Diserminiative Valuery							
No	Dimensions	Item No						
1	Emotional Life	(2,7)						
2	Social Life	(15,16,20,22)						
3	Family life, housing	30						
4	Public health and everyday jobs	(34,36,38)						
5	Economics	(44,45,46,47,48,49,50)						
6	Luxury	(52,57,60,61,62)						
7	Religious life	67						
8	Access to Technology	80						

Table (2). The Items Deleted According to Discriminative Validity

The items of each dimension became as follows:

- Emotional life dimension: (8) items.
- Social life dimension: (9) items.
- Family life and residence dimension: (9) items.
- Public health and daily jobs dimension: (7) items.
- Luxury dimension: (8) items.
- Religious life dimension: (7) items.
- Technological facilities dimension: (8) items.

3- Factor Analysis: Factor analysis was conducted for the scale item by using Principle Components method with leaning recycling method (Opleman). This showed that there are (11) factors with a rate of more than (0.20). Table (3) lists the Eginvalue and the variance percent for each factor along with the cumulative percent. The variance percent was (7627.%) of total variance which is an acceptable value for the study.

Factor	Eginvalue	Percent of Variance	Cumulative of Variance
1	17.81	11.96	11.96
2	14.64	11.49	23.45
3	13.94	9.43	32.88
4	13.01	9.15	42.03
5	11.56	8.93	50.96
6	10.65	8.37	59.33
7	9.54	7.38	66.71
8	8.79	3.62	70.33
9	5.65	1.40	71.73
10	3.24	1.36	73.09
11	2.53	1.12	74.21
12	2.03	1.05	75.26
13	1.96	1.01	76.27

Table (3). Values of Eginvalue and Cumulative of Variance for QOL Scale

After reviewing the factor analysis results that showed that the items are characterized into (13) factors; some items were found to identically match some of the factors. Table (4) lists the items that matched the dimensions and are statistically accepted for the scale.

Emo	Emotional		cial	Far li hou	nily fe, sing	Public health and everyday jobs		alth luxury day		Public health luxury and everyday jobs		Reli li	gious ife	Acce Techr	ss to lology
No	P.S	No	P.S	No	P.S	No	P.S	No	P.S	No	P.S	No	P.S		
1	.91	1	.65	1	.87	1	.12	1	.89	1	.82	1	.90		
2	.90	2	.65	2	.17	2	.82	2	.16	2	.82	2	.89		
3	.90	3	.64	3	.45	3	.80	3	.83	3	.80	3	.86		
4	.12	4	2.4	4	.84	4	.30	4	.12	4	.10	4	.90		
5	.89	5	.14	5	.82	5	.79	5	.90	5	.15	5	.65		
6	.16	6	.63	6	.18	6	.79	6	.89	6	.89	6	.24		
7	.83	7	.62	7	.12	7	.19	7	.26	7	.65	7	.64		
8	.39	8	12.	8	.45	-	-	8	64.	-	-	8	.67		
_	-	9	.50	9	.53	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-		

Table (4). Item saturated in each Dimension for QOL Scale

Depending on the factor analysis results; economic life dimension was deleted, therefore (13) items were also deleted to conclude with having a (7) dimensions scale with (43) items as listed in Table (5).

Serial No	Factor	Serial No. of Positive Items	Serial No. of Negative Items	Total
1	Emotional Life	5	1	6
2	Social Life	4	3	7
3	Family life, housing	6	-	6
4	Public health and everyday jobs	5	-	5
5	luxury	6	-	6
6	Religious life	5	-	5
7	Access to Technology	7	1	8
	Total	38	5	43

Table (5). The Total of Positive Items & Negative Items for QOL Scale

Second: Instrument Reliability: To ensure the instrument stability; the researchers verified the scale stability by two methods; test- retest method and the coefficient of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha). The stability was calculated by test- retest after a period of two weeks with the use of Pearson's coefficient and the calculation of Cronbach's alpha for each dimension as listed in Table (6).

Serial No	Dimension	Number of Items	Test-retest	Cronbach's alpha
1	Emotional Life	6	0,766	0,756
2	Social Life	7	0,752	0,734
3	Family life, housing	6	0,633	0,787
4	Public health and everyday jobs	5	0,818	0,737
5	luxury	6	0,779	0,777
6	Religious life	5	0,914	0,840
7	Technology	8	0,775	0,724
	Total	43	0,823	0,711

Table (6). Values of Test-retest and Consistency Reliability for QOL Scale

Table (6) shows that test- retest stability values for each dimension ranged between (0,633-0,914), while, Cronbach's Alpha ranged between (0,724 - 0,840), which are acceptable for the current study objectives. Factor analysis was conducted on the relation between the individual's performance on a certain item and the dimension in which the item is included for the (630) students to ensure that the items belongs to the dimension. Table (7) lists the results.

Emotional Life Social		al Life	Family life, housing		Public health and everyday jobs		luxury		Religious life		Access to Technology		
No	R	No	R	No	R	No	R	No	R	No	R	No	R
1	0.35	1	0.42	1	0.41	1	0.33	1	0.35	1	0.34	1	0.39
2	0.22	2	0.43	2	0.48	2	0.28	2	0.47	2	0.36	2	0.42
3	0.38	3	0.44	3	0.46	3	0.36	3	0.48	3	0.38	3	0.44
4	0.36	4	0.36	4	0.34	4	0.34	4	0.46	4	0.46	4	0.43
5	0.40	5	0.38	5	0.33	5	0.38	5	0.41	5	0.43	5	0.41
6	0.39	6	0.37	6	0.35	-	-	6	0.38	-	-	6	0.36
-	-	7	0.37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0.39
-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	8	0.46

Table (7). Item Correlation with Each Dimension for QOL Scale

Table (7) shows that factor coefficients for the items and dimensions were statistical significances, which prove that the scale possesses a good internal consistency. Pearson coefficient was used to construct the internal consistency matrix as listed in Table (8).

Dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Emotional Life							
Social Life	0.445						
Family life, housing	0.463	0.396					
Public health and	0.467	0.421	0.465				
everyday jobs							
luxury	0.487	0.451	0.423	0.451			
Religious life	0.498	0.432	0.487	0.478	0.482		
Access to	0.501	0.411	0.465	0.495	0.483	0.484	
Technology							

Table (8). Sub Correlations Coefficients between Scale Dimensions Scale

Depending on the results of the first question, a scale with suitable psychometric characteristics was constructed to include (43) items categorized into (7) dimensions.

To answer the second question, "Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian youth life quality that can be attributed to students' gender?" T-test method was used for each dimension as listed in Table (9).

Candan	Carla Dimandiana	Mana	т	C !	
Gender	Scale Dimensions	Means	1	Sig	
Males	Emotional Life	3.45	3.35	0.001	
Female		3.88			
Males	Social Life	3.51	3.02	0.04	
Female		3.22			
Males	Family life, housing	3.26	3.65	0.000	
Female		3.68			
Males	Public health and everyday	3.65	2.12	0.561	
Female	jobs	3.58			
Males	luxury	3.56	3.65		
Female		4.03			
Males	Religious life	4.16	3.48	0.001	
Female		3.77			
Males	Access to Technology	4.23	2.16	0.421	
Female		4.17			

Table (9). Different between QOL According to Youth Gender

The previous table shows that there are statistical differences between males and females regarding life quality except for public health and daily jobs dimension. The statistical differences were as follows:

- Emotional life: the differences were in favor of females, which show that females in Jordanian community are concerned with emotions more than males. This can be explained by the researchers by the fact that females life quality is a priority in their daily life as they are emotional corresponding to the common cultural dimension.

- Social life: the differences were in favor of males which shows that males in Jordanian community focus on social

dimension more than females. This can be explained by the researchers by the fact that Jordanian community gives males more freedom in social activities than females.

- Family life and residence: the differences were in favor of females, which show that females in Jordanian community are more concerned with family life than males. This can be explained by the researchers by the fact that the family life in Jordanian community is the female's responsibility in every aspect.

- Public health and daily jobs: there were no statistical differences between males and females. This shows that both of them are concerned with this dimension equally. The researchers attribute this result to the fact that this dimension is important for both genders.

- Luxury: the differences were in favor of females, showing that females in Jordanian community are more concerned with emotional dimension, which can be explained by the fact that females care about luxury and life level more than males.

- Religious life: there were differences for males. Which shows that males in Jordanian community are more concerned with religious life because social activities and religious freedom outside their houses (such as praying in mosques) are easier for males than females; also, the researchers believe that the freedom of males to participate in some religious institutions is more than it is for females?

- Technological facilities: there were no differences between males and females showing that both are concerned with this dimension. Researchers believe that this result shows that there is an actual concern from both genders regarding the availability of technological facilities especially in modern time.

To answer the third question, "Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian youth life quality that can be attributed to students' place of residence?" Variance of the total score analysis method was applied on the life quality scale. Table (10) lists the results.

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	DF	Means of Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	123.696	3	41.23	5.27	
Within Groups	4563.258	626	7.82		
Total	4686.95	629			

Table (10). Different between QOL According to Youth Residence

Table (10) shows that there are statistical differences for the overall score of the QOL scale attributed to place of residence variable. In order to identify the affected items; Scheffé's test was applied as listed in Table (11).

Tuste (11). 2 meteretes in the QOL Sepending on the Three of Residence										
Levels	Means	City	Village	Badia	Countryside					
City	4.21		0.006	0.53	0.62					
Village	3.63			0.23	0.26					
Badia	3.03				0.32					
Countryside	2.96									

 Table (11). Differences in the QOL Depending on the Place of Residence

Table (11) shows that there are statistical differences depending on place of residence; those are in favor of students who live in the city not the village. This shows that life quality is affected by the place of residence. Researchers attribute this for the available facilities in the city and the community diversity in cities.

To answer the fourth question, "Are there any statistical differences related to Jordanian youth life quality that can be attributed to students' university major?" T-test method was conducted as listed in Table (12).

Specialization	SD	Means	Т	Sig
Scientific	1.09	4.21	1.62	0.354
Humaneness	1.15	4.15		

Table (12). Different between QOL According to Youth Gender

From the table (12) there are statistical differences for the student major variable proving that it affects the QOL. This shows that university major affects the QOL noting that the mean values were high.

4. Conclusion

The primary aim of the current study was to develop a valid and reliable instrument for use by professionals and researchers to measure youth QOL in Jordan. This has involved a variety of activities; we reviewed the relevant literature, conducted pilot study, asked working professionals, consulted experts, and statistically tested the scale. We have shown above the procedure of developing the QOL.

Content, discriminate and factor analysis validity were evidenced in the QOL. Correlation coefficients, test- retest and Cronbach's alpha were used to assess the stability of the scale and it was concluded that the scale demonstrated good stability. Piloting the scale suggests that it is easy to administer tool and understandable, so it is expected to have high response rate.

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بناء مقياس لجودة حياة الشباب في الأردن في المجتمع الأردني

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ملخص

تسعى الدراسة إلى إيجاد مقياس لتحديد مدى جودة الحياة في الأردن. تكونت عينة الدراسة من 630 طالب جامعة (ذكور وإناث) من التخصصات الإنسانية والعلمية في الجامعة الأردنية وجامعة البلقاء التطبيقية. وتم تصميم مقياس يتكون من 43 فقرة مقسمة بناءً على 7 أبعاد (الحياة العاطفية، الحياة الاجتماعية، الحياة العائلية، الصحة العامة، العمل اليومي، الحياة الدينية والتكنولوجيا المتوفرة). وقد أظهرت النتائج فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في مدى جودة الحياة تعزى إلى الجنس ومكان الإقامة بينما لا توجد فروق تعزى إلى متغير التخصص الجامعي.

الكلمات الدالة: بناء مقياس، جودة الحياة، الشباب في المجتمع الأردني.

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