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Examining the Impact of a Proposed Recreational Sports Program on the Psychological Well-Being of Social Sciences Students at Amar Thelidji University

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Abstract:

The present research paper aims to explore the impact of a recreational sports initiative on the psychological well-being of a group of social science students enrolled at the University of Amar Thelidji, Laghouat. The sample of study consists of 30 male students, divided equally into two groups: experimental (15 students) and control (15 students). The study employed the psychological health scale as the main instrument for assessment, implementing an experimental design. Results show statistically significant differences in mental health outcomes between the experimental and control groups at the time of the experimental cohort's post-intervention assessment.

Keywords: Recreational program; Mental health; social sciences students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Good psychological well-being has been defined as feelings of assurance, fulfillment, joy, and happiness. Psychologically, they are generally calm, relaxed, and accepting of themselves and others. In addition, they demonstrate a strong feeling of hope and optimism, which positively affects their spirits and increases their drive to participate actively in a variety of activities. Their increased motivation fuels their desire to engage in social relationships and pushes them to satisfy their basic psychological requirements. They welcome life, appreciating its worth, participating actively in social gatherings, creating fruitful connections and friendships, and blending in with their surroundings, whether it be their home, place of education, or place of employment. Their need for recognition and a sense of belonging is met by this integration.

Mental well-being within university settings encompasses fostering a community that prioritizes students' psychological comfort, overall well-being, and intellectual prowess, devoid of issues, stress, or turmoil. Psychological security forms a cornerstone for any academic or social endeavor, ensuring individuals maintain confidence in themselves and their peers. The cultivation of mutual psychological respect among students is vital, grounded in solid moral, religious, and mental health principles, facilitating harmonious interpersonal dynamics while preserving each person's individual, academic, and social standing. Mental health is integral to one's overall health, representing a state of holistic physical, mental, and social well-being, devoid of disruption or conflict with prevailing circumstances. It entails addressing psychological shortcomings, leveraging personal strengths, adeptly adapting to tasks at hand, and fostering collaborative engagement, particularly among university students.

The intersection of sports and mental health has garnered significant attention, highlighting a correlation between the two that has been substantiated by various studies. Some research indicates that engaging in sports activities, particularly team sports, may offer greater mental health support compared to individual sports. Furthermore, studies suggest that physical activity can be as effective as antidepressant medications, with the positive effects of exercise enduring longer than those of antidepressants. Against this backdrop, this study aims to explore the significance of a proposed recreational sports program and



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its potential impact on the mental well-being of undergraduate students majoring in Social Sciences at the University of Laghouat.

1.1.Statement of the Problem

The present study revolves around the significance of recreation as a leisure pursuit and its integration into social sciences. Given that recreational activities have gained prominence, there has been a proliferation of interest and diversification within these domains. Sports and recreational endeavors stand out as among the most prevalent pursuits in society, constituting a crucial aspect of leisure time engagement. Notably, these activities wield substantial influence, contributing significantly to both physical and mental well-being. They are recognized for fostering physical fitness, happiness, and joy, while also alleviating fatigue and boredom. Moreover, engaging in recreational pursuits is purported to enhance individuals' efficiency and effectiveness in their daily lives and professional endeavors (Attiyat, 1988, p. 21).

Undoubtedly, individuals opt for these activities by choice rather than coercion, fulfilling their desires and interests. Consequently, maximizing one's leisure time emerges as the optimal approach to compensate for any physical or mental health deficits accumulated over preceding years, while also enhancing one's perspective on life and bolstering the readiness to confront it with vitality, enthusiasm, and distinction. By engaging with others and sharing ideas and knowledge, individuals cultivate self-assurance. Eventually, they evolve into actively engaged individuals who garner respect and attention from their peers (Rizeiqat, 2022, pp. 30-31).

Charles Butcher considers sport an essential element in public education and the experimental environment to form integrated citizens in physical and psychological terms. The latter is achieved through a variety of physical activities that have been carefully chosen to achieve these goals (Awad Al-Basiouni, 1992, p. 09).

Given the paramount importance of engaging in sports activities for both individuals and society, it has become imperative to promote such activities as a means of preventing and addressing various health issues stemming from sedentary lifestyles and other life challenges. The shift in perception regarding sports, from mere competition to a holistic approach focused on health, underscores its vital role in enhancing overall well-being across psychological, social, and physical dimensions. Students, in particular, contend with



psychological stressors arising from academic pressures, living conditions, and separation from their families. Adjusting to these circumstances often necessitates adopting a lifestyle that prioritizes satisfaction of their needs and pursuit of enjoyment, thus fostering their own quality of life. Fostering mental stability contributes significantly to bolstering both physical and mental health.

Recreational programs are defined as that number of recreational activities that individual practitioners, pioneers, supervisors, and administrators choose together to practice in an organized and unorganized manner in a specific place and at a specific time that suits the practitioners' free time for the purpose of achieving the goal of recreation and recreational education (Taha, 2006, p. 52).

1.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to investigate the effects of implementing a recreational and sports program on various dimensions of university students' psychological well-being. Specifically, we aim to assess the program's influence on feelings of happiness, optimism, and self-confidence among participants. To address this, our research endeavors to answer the following overarching question:

- Are there statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test on mental health?

This question includes the following sub-questions:

- Are there statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test level of feeling of happiness?
- Are there statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test level of optimism?

Based on these questions, we hypothesize the following:

- There are statistically significant differences between members of the control and experimental group in the post-test on mental health

On this basis, the following sub-hypotheses are proposed:

- There are statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test level of feeling of happiness.



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- There are statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test level of optimism.

1.3. Research Objectives

The present research attempts to shed light on how all mental health-related behaviors are understood by investigating the theoretical frameworks that underlie them and utilizing knowledge from previous research to promote a more comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of these diseases. This endeavor also seeks to educate educators, psychologists, and other interested parties in the field of education regarding the educational benefits of recreational sports in improving mental health and assessing their favorable impact on academic achievement.

- Attempting to contribute with applicable scientific research that benefits society, its results help improve the mood and psychology of students and their adaptation to study conditions after practicing sports activity.
- Examining the differences between members of the control and experimental group in the post-test of the level of mental health.
- Examining the differences between members of the control and experimental group in the post-test level of feeling of happiness.
- Examining the differences between members of the control and experimental group in the post-test of the level of optimism.

1.4. Significance of the Research

The significance of this research in the practical side is though examining the level of mental health among students would help in:

- Planning to improve the conditions of this category.
- Developing appropriate and possible solutions to the sources and negatives that affect mental health.
- Benefiting from the results of the current study in the fact that practicing recreational sports activities would increase the results of academic achievement.

2. Research Concepts

2.1. Recreational sports activity

Linguistically: Originating from the Arabic verb "*raha*," or rest in English signifying pleasure and delight.



Technically: it encompasses the facets of activity or experiences arising from discretionary leisure time, deliberately selected by individuals to derive personal pleasure and enjoyment while acquiring numerous personal and social values. (El-Hamahamy, 1999, p. 29).

2.2. Recreational sports program

Typically, a recreational program is delineated as a collection of leisure activities orchestrated and overseen by a recreation leader. Its primary objective is to facilitate recreational education, aimed at fostering optimal behavior among participants during leisure hours. This is accomplished through the cultivation of knowledge and skills, as well as the cultivation of positive attitudes towards leisure pursuits. (Tahani Abdel Salam, 2001, p. 233).

2.3. Mental health

As articulated by Dr. Muhammad Qasim Abdullah, it encompasses the seamless alignment of various bodily functions, coupled with the capability to confront challenges and adapt to fluctuations in one's surroundings, fostering a positive sense of vigor, resilience, and vitality. This holistic harmony among bodily functions entails each organ operating efficiently, fulfilling its role in serving the needs of other bodily systems without excess or deficiency. (Qasim, 2010, pp. 18-19). In procedural terms, it encompasses all behaviors exhibited by students that are fundamentally tied to markers of happiness and optimism.

2.4. Sociology students

They are individuals whose academic proficiency enabled them to transition from secondary school to university and opt for a specialization in social sciences.

2.5. Happiness

It signifies self-contentment, inner harmony, and acceptance of others. The interpretation and essence of happiness vary among individuals, with conditions and criteria for happiness differing from person to person. Philosophers and thinkers, both ancient and contemporary, have presented diverse descriptions of happiness. Procedurally, it refers to an individual's sense of fulfillment and contentment in life, characterized by the presence of positive emotions and psychological peace.

2.6. Optimism

Abdel Khaleq and Al-Ansari (1995) characterize it as an optimistic outlook toward the future, where individuals anticipate the best outcomes and



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await positivity and success. Procedurally, it entails focusing on the brighter aspects of events, embodying a positive perspective on life.

3. Previous studies

In a study conducted by Bouzidi Mounir (2006) titled "*The Effectiveness of Recreational Sports Activity in Preventing Anxiety Among University Students*," the objective was to pinpoint the periods during which university students experience heightened anxiety levels and to examine the psychological and emotional factors influencing students during sports engagement. The study also aimed to assess the frequency of sports participation during leisure time and students' inclinations towards alleviating psychological issues, particularly anxiety. Employing a descriptive approach, the researcher selected a sample comprising students from the National Preparatory School for Engineer Studies in Rouiba, aged between 17 and 21 years, all of whom were male. The sample consisted of 346 students. Data collection methods included questionnaires, tests, and interviews, with the distribution of the Spielberger Anxiety Test (Self-Assessment List). The findings revealed that the average anxiety scores among students engaging in recreational sports activities were notably lower compared to non-participants. Furthermore, statistically significant disparities in anxiety levels were observed between the two groups: those participating in recreational sports activities and those who were not.

In a study conducted by Abdel Nasser Abdel Rahim Qaddumi (2015) titled "*The Level of Optimism Among Team Sports Players in Palestinian Universities*," the objective was to assess the optimism levels among players of team sports in Palestinian universities, while also examining potential differences in optimism based on game variables, academic level, and playing experience. The study encompassed a sample of 246 student players, with optimism measured using the Abdel Khaleq (1996) scale comprising 15 items. Data analysis involved the use of arithmetic means, percentages, and one-way analysis of variance, supplemented by Tukey's test for post hoc comparisons as necessary. Findings indicated a high overall level of optimism among the study sample, with a response rate of 76.20%. Moreover, the study revealed no statistically significant differences in optimism levels among players based on playing experience. However, differences were observed concerning game type, favoring basketball players, and academic level, favoring fourth-year students. Based on these results, the researcher recommended prioritizing sports activities



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for their beneficial impact on students' personal development and adaptation to university life.

Ahmed Rafi's research (2019), titled "The Association Between Mental Health and Psychological Resilience Among Students of the Institute of Science and Technology for Physical and Sports Activities," sought to explore the connection between mental health and psychological resilience among university students. Employing a descriptive correlational approach, the researcher utilized both the psychological health scale and the mental health scale. Psychological resilience was assessed among a random sample of 70 students from the University of Bouira. The findings revealed a significant correlation between psychological health and psychological resilience.

In a study conducted by Mazouzi Miloud (2021) titled *"The Contribution of Physical Sports Activity to the Psychological Well-being of University Students Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic,"* the objective was to ascertain the extent to which engaging in physical sports activity contributes to enhancing psychological well-being among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employing a descriptive approach via survey methodology, the researcher examined a sample of 40 students from the Institute of Science and Technology for Physical and Sports Activities at the University of Ouargla. The Warrick-Edinburgh scale was employed to assess psychological well-being. The findings underscored the positive impact of physical sports activity on enhancing students' psychological well-being, prompting the study to advocate for the necessity of incorporating physical activity into students' routines to promote mental health.

In a study conducted by Omrani Ismail et al. (2021) titled *"Enhancing Communication Skills through Engagement in Physical Sports Activity During Leisure Time among University Students,"* the objective was to assess the significance of participating in physical sports activities during leisure time in fostering communication skills among students in university communities in the state of Chlef. The study, comprising a sample of 40 students, employed an experimental methodology alongside a communication skills assessment tool. Results indicated a notable contribution of physical activity to the enhancement of students' communication skills.

In a study conducted by Belkacem Makhoulf (2022) titled *"Assessing Quality of Life and Self-Confidence Levels among Students at the Institute of Science and Technology for Physical Activities and Sports in M'sila,"* the



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objective was to explore the correlation between psychological quality of life and self-confidence among a sample of students from the aforementioned institute. The study administered the Psychological Quality of Life and Self-Confidence Scale to 154 students, employing a methodological approach. Findings indicated that students exhibited high levels of psychological quality of life and self-confidence, except for the dimension of self-acceptance, which was rated as average. Statistically significant differences were observed in the total scores for psychological quality of life across various dimensions. However, no significant differences were noted in the total scores for self-confidence or in the dimensions of self-reliance and self-confidence in social situations.

4. Research Methodology

The major determinant of the appropriate research approach is, beyond uncertainty, the nature of the topic being studied. The experimental approach was used in this work to examine hypotheses and establish their validity. With this approach, variables that can unintentionally affect the researcher during experiments are isolated, strict quantitative control is used, and the effects of one variable on another are closely examined.

4.1. Experimental design

The method by which the researcher is able to collect the required data, manage the variables or circumstances that may impact this data, and then carry out the relevant analysis to address the research questions in a well-thought-out plan is known as experimental design. The researcher's skill and aptitude in implementing the principles of good experimental design—which are regarded as the experiment's implementation plan—determine the quality of the experiment.

The researchers employed an experimental design for two groups, an experimental group and a control group, with pre- and post-tests, due to its suitability to the nature of the research, as the experimental method is the only research method that can truly test the hypotheses of cause-and-effect relationships, and this approach represents the most honest approach to solving many problems. Scientific knowledge, both practical and theoretical.

4.2. Research population and sample

In this study, two groups were utilized: a control group and an experimental group comprising male students enrolled in the bachelor's degree



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program during the 2023/2024 academic year. Each group consisted of 15 intentionally selected students, chosen to ensure homogeneity between the two groups. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 21 years. The selection of the sample was influenced by the available resources to implement the recreational program. Initially, the intention was to conduct the program in a sports hall. However, due to logistical constraints, such as the unavailability of the facility, the program was instead conducted at a neighborhood playground. Subsequently, the students were divided into two groups: control and experimental.

4.3. Research Fields

The participants of this study were male students enrolled in the bachelor's degree program at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Ammar Thelidji University in Laghouat, for the academic year 2022/2023. The research took place between October 1, 2024, and October 2, 2024, within the spatial context of the Department of Social Sciences, Ammar Thelidji University, Laghouat, specifically at Jouari Stadium.

4.4. Data Collection Tools

Mental Health Questionnaire: Designed by the researcher, we constructed it to measure mental health. It consists of 30 items divided into two dimensions:

- Feeling happy, statements from (1) to (15).
- Optimism and its statements from (16) to (30).

The questions of this questionnaire are answered and corrected, so that a score is calculated for each of the three sub-scales separately (three-sided Likert), and their scores are summed to obtain the total score on the questionnaire.

Recreational sports program: It contains 08 categories that are conducted in the evening in the stadium (an average of two classes per week).

Objectives of the proposed recreational sports program:

- Forming positive attitudes towards mental health
- Achieving mental health and treating some psychological problems through recreational sports
- Developing students' attitudes towards leisure and recreational activities
- Providing students with skills and hobbies related to leisure and recreation



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- Satisfying the inclinations and needs of students, which would reduce some of the psychological problems that accompany them in the learning process.
- Achieving emotional balance and developing some aspects of personality
- Overcoming tensions and psychological disorders in order to achieve the best possible results

4.5. Exploratory study:

During this phase, we gathered information and reviewed relevant research, studies, and documents pertaining to the research topic. The aim was to acquire ample information and data, familiarize ourselves with all aspects of the subject, and develop a comprehensive understanding. This process enabled us to establish a solid theoretical foundation before implementing the program and distributing related forms. Additionally, we conducted an exploratory study with the research sample to delve into their recreational practices. We also engaged with several students to gather as much information as possible, thereby addressing the research problem effectively and gaining deeper insights into the study population, including their study schedules, recreational activities, and other relevant factors.

4.5.1. Psychometric properties of the scale

Validity of the scale:

Arbiters' Validity: Prior to commencing the exploratory study, we ensured the credibility of the arbiters for the scale. We presented the scale to a panel of professors holding doctoral and master's degrees, as well as experts in the fields of physical education and psychology from the University of Laghouat and other institutions. Drawing from their insights and recommendations, we made necessary modifications to refine the mental health scale, ultimately arriving at its final version.

Table 1. Self-validity coefficient for the mental health questionnaire

Dimension	Pearson correlation coefficient	Significance level
Feelings of happiness	0.73	0.05



Optimism	0.79	0.05
The total score of the mental health scale	0.85	0.05

Source: The researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS. The preceding table indicates that the self-honesty coefficients are uniformly high and nearing the 0.01 threshold, exhibiting significance at the 0.05 level. This substantiates that the questionnaire maintains a high level of self-honesty. Reliability of the questionnaire: Internal consistency reliability was used using the Cronbach alpha method, and the following table shows the results of the reliability coefficient:

Table 2. the results of the reliability coefficient

Dimensions of the scale and the total score	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	N of the statements
Happiness	0.93	15
optimism	0.82	15
Psychological well-being scale	0.80	30

Source: The researchers based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS. It is clear from the previous table that the questionnaire has a high level of reliability that we can infer and rely on in the study, and through Cronbach's alpha coefficients, all of which turned out to be significant at the significance level (0.01).

4.6. Statistical methods

We employed a variety of methods to analyze the study data with the aim of assessing the impact of the proposed recreational sports program on enhancing mental health. Our analysis primarily relied on the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for statistical processing.

- Arithmetic averages x
- Standard deviations
- T. Test

5. Results Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion

5.1. Presentation of results related to the first sub-hypothesis:



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The hypothesis posits that "there exist statistically significant variances between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group regarding the happiness levels among the students." To evaluate this assertion, the subsequent statistical analysis was employed: assessing the students' sense of happiness. Table (03) displays the outcomes of the T-Test conducted to ascertain the significance of variances between the pre-test and post-test scores of both the experimental and control groups concerning the level of happiness perception.

Table 3. the results of the T-Test

Group s test	Experiental group		Control group		T- Tes t	Degr e of freedo m	Tabul ar T	S i g
	Arithmet ic average	standar d deviatio n	Arithmet ic average	standar d deviatio n				
Pre- test	28.46	3.52	25.80	2.90	2.2 6	28	2.04	S i g
Post- test	31.33	2.22	27.80	6.80	1.9 1			

Source: The researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS Referring to Table (02), we observe that in the pre-test phase, the control group exhibited an arithmetic mean of (25.80) on the happiness perception scale, with a standard deviation of (2.90). The calculated "t" value amounted to (2.26), derived from a sample size yielding a degree of freedom of 28. Meanwhile, the experimental group manifested an arithmetic mean of (2.26). Transitioning to the post-test phase, the control group displayed an arithmetic mean of (31.33) on the happiness perception scale, accompanied by a standard deviation of (2.22). The calculated "t" value equated to (1.91), with the tabulated "t" value being (2.04) for a degree of freedom of 28. The probability value (sig) was determined to be (0.03), which falls below the significance threshold of (0.05), affirming the existence of statistically significant variances between the pre- and post-test phases for the experimental group, favoring the latter.



5.2. Presentation of results related to the second sub-hypothesis

The hypothesis asserts that "there exist statistically significant differences between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group regarding the level of optimism among the students." To examine this hypothesis, the following statistical treatment was employed:

Table 3. the results of the T-Test for the significance of the differences between the Pre-test and the post-test for the experimental and control group on the level of optimism.

Groups Tests	Experimental group		Control group		T-test	Degree of freedom	Tabular T	Sig
	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation				
Pre-test	31.33	2.22	27.80	5.80	1.91	28	2.76	Sig
Post-Test	29.66	2.52	24.73	3.89	4.11			

Source: The researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS

Based on table (04), we observe that in the Pre-test phase, the control group demonstrated an arithmetic mean of (27.80) on the optimism scale, with a standard deviation of (5.80). The calculated "t" value yielded (1.91), based on a degree of freedom of 28. Conversely, the experimental group displayed an arithmetic mean of (1.91) with the same degree of freedom. Shifting to the post-test phase, the control group recorded an arithmetic mean of (29.66) on the optimism scale, alongside a standard deviation of (2.52). The calculated "t" value amounted to (4.11), while the tabulated "t" value was (2.76) for a degree of freedom of 28. The probability value (sig) was computed as 0.01, which falls below the significance level of 0.05, thus confirming the presence of statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-tests of the experimental group, favoring the latter.

5.3. Presentation of results related to the main hypothesis

The hypothesis posits that "there are statistically significant differences between members of the control and experimental groups in the post-test on



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mental health." To evaluate this hypothesis, the following statistical treatment was employed:

Table 3. the results of the T. Test for the significance of the differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the pre- and post-tests of mental health.

Groups Tests	Experimental group		Control group		T-test	Degree of freedom	Tabular T	Sig
	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation				
Pre-test	55.33	5.72	5.60	4.71	2.47	28	2.76	Sig
Post-Test	61.00	3.98	52.20	6.88	4.28			

Source: The researcher based on the outputs of the statistical program SPSS

Based on Table 05, it is evident that in the Pre-test phase, the control group displayed an arithmetic mean of (50.60) on the mental health scale, with a standard deviation of (4.71) and a calculated "t" value of (2.47). Conversely, in the post-test phase, the experimental group exhibited an arithmetic mean of (61.00) on the same scale, with a standard deviation of (3.98) and a calculated "t" value of (4.28). The tabulated "t" value was determined to be (2.76) for a degree of freedom of 28. The probability value (sig) was computed as 0.01, which is below the significance level of 0.05. This confirms the presence of statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-tests of the experimental group, favoring the latter. Consequently, the program has a discernible impact on the psychological health of the students, as corroborated by the results of the overarching hypothesis, which affirmed the significant influence of the proposed recreational sports program on enhancing the psychological well-being of the students, as delineated in the preceding tables. There are, in fact, statistically significant variations in optimism and happiness between the control and experimental groups, as these tables show.

6. Analysis and discussion of the results



6.1. Discussion of the results of the first sub-hypothesis

- There are statistically significant differences between members of the control group and the experimental group in the post-test level of feeling of happiness. Based on the findings presented in Table No. (3), it is evident that engaging in recreational sports activities yields a notable enhancement in students' emotional well-being. This improvement encompasses heightened self-confidence, increased feelings of happiness and relaxation, as well as a reduction in symptoms associated with depression and mild anxiety. Moreover, physical exercise exhibits the capacity to ameliorate disrupted sleep patterns often stemming from psychological stressors. It is noteworthy that the benefits derived from exercise extend beyond the physical realm, as it engenders a sense of control over one's body and life circumstances.

This corroborates findings from Bouzaidi Mounir's (2006) study titled "The effectiveness of recreational sports activity in preventing cases of anxiety among students," which delves into the temporal occurrences of anxiety among university students and elucidates the psychological and emotional factors influenced by engagement in recreational sports. Mounir's study revealed a lower average of anxiety scores among students actively participating in recreational sports compared to non-participants. These findings are congruent with those of Mazouzi Miloud's (2021) research titled "The extent to which physical sports activity contributes to the psychological well-being of university students." Miloud's study underscores the pivotal role of physical sports activity in augmenting students' psychological well-being, emphasizing its significant impact on fostering happiness and mood enhancement.

6.2. Discussion of the results of the second sub hypothesis

Upon reviewing Table No. (4), it becomes evident that the control group exhibited an arithmetic mean of (27.80) on the optimism scale in the pre-test phase, while the experimental group recorded an arithmetic mean of (29.66) in the post-test phase. This discrepancy signifies the presence of statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-tests for the experimental group, favoring the post-test. These findings align with the outcomes of Abdel Nasser Abdel Rahim Qaddumi's (2015) study titled "The level of optimism among players of collective sports teams in Palestinian universities." Qaddumi's study revealed a high overall level of optimism among the sampled individuals, indicating a noteworthy contribution of recreational sports activity to enhancing optimism levels among participating students. Optimism, characterized by the



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belief in favorable outcomes despite adversity, underscores an individual's resilience and ability to discern positive aspects within challenging circumstances. Optimistic individuals possess a propensity to anticipate positive outcomes, regardless of the perceived difficulty of the situation, thus perpetuating a constructive outlook on life.

6.3. Discussion of the results of the main hypothesis

There are statistically significant differences between members of the control and experimental group in the post-test on mental health.

Examining the results in Table No. (5), we find that there are statistically significant differences in mental health between the experimental and control groups at the post-test stage, with the experimental group benefiting. This finding, which is supported by a comparison of the respective averages, highlights the program's demonstrable effects on students' mental health. These outcomes substantiate the overarching hypothesis, affirming the noteworthy influence of the proposed recreational sports program in ameliorating students' mental health, as delineated in the preceding tables.

Furthermore, these tables also affirm the presence of statistically significant discrepancies between the control and experimental groups in both feelings of happiness and optimism. This corroborates findings from studies conducted by Bouzaidi Mounir (2006) and Mazouzi Miloud (2021), which underscore the significance of recreational sports activity in promoting mental health and well-being. Additionally, congruent with the research by Omrani Ismail (2021), which endeavors to demonstrate the role of sports in fostering psychological health by honing students' communication skills during leisure-time practice, our study underscores the transformative potential of recreational sports activity. It not only enhances students' quality of life across physiological, social, and behavioral dimensions but also fosters positive engagement in leisure activities, as posited by Jamal Abbas et al. (2012).

Drawing from Maslow's conceptualization, psychological health embodies the holistic fulfillment of individual needs, encompassing integrity, self-expression, vocational dedication, and self-discovery. In this context, recreational sports activity emerges as a conduit for realizing these needs, facilitating happiness, life adaptation, and holistic well-being across psychological, emotional, and social spheres, which reverberate throughout the entirety of an individual's being.

7. Conclusion:



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Based on the findings confirming the significant positive impact of our proposed recreational sports program on enhancing students' mental well-being, it's evident that the realm of recreation stands as a vast domain built upon scientific principles. Nurturing this field demands capable, specialized oversight. We recognize its interconnectedness with all facets of society, encompassing individuals' demographics such as age, gender, and occupation, as well as broader group dynamics including economic status and cultural background. These variables shape the planning, development, and execution of recreational initiatives.

Given that a substantial portion of Algeria's university populace comprises students who inherently gravitate towards physical and sports activities for leisure, it falls upon university administrators and residential staff to curate sports and cultural agendas. These programs should be self-directed to bolster students' psychological well-being, with a particular emphasis on physical pursuits as a fundamental avenue for recreation. Such endeavors aim to foster serenity, cohesion, and societal advancement among conscientious communities.

Building upon our research outcomes, we offer actionable suggestions and recommendations tailored for university students and those vested in the university recreation domain. These recommendations aspire to translate into tangible enhancements, including:

1. Implementing structured sports and cultural programs within university settings, tailored to students' diverse interests and needs.
2. Establishing wellness initiatives that integrate physical activities as a cornerstone for promoting mental health and social cohesion.
3. Encouraging student involvement in program design and execution to ensure relevance and inclusivity.
4. Investing in professional development opportunities for recreation supervisors to enhance their competency and efficacy in guiding recreational endeavors.
5. Fostering partnerships with local communities and businesses to expand recreational offerings and resources.
6. Conducting regular assessments and evaluations to gauge the efficacy and impact of recreational programs, allowing for continuous improvement and refinement.



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By embracing these recommendations, we aim to

- Cultivate a university environment that prioritizes holistic well-being and fosters a vibrant culture of recreation and self-improvement.
- Preparing sports and cultural programs and using them in a self-guidance manner to improve the mental health of university students.
- A study on the role of residence directors in caring for students who suffer from psychological problems.
- Studying the relationship between mental health and feelings of happiness from a positive and negative perspective and the extent of the effect of practicing recreational sports activity to reduce them.
- Preparing recreational sports programs that combine study habits and some sports activity techniques to study their effectiveness in treating psychological problems in general and negative behaviors among students and within university residence in particular.
- Studying the reality of students who suffer from social anxiety between traditional treatment and contemporary treatment.
- Strengthening university sports and paying attention to them would increase some behaviors such as mental health and violence within the university environment.

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