

Designing Guidance Programs in the School Environment: Concept, Types, Characteristics and Foundations of its Construction

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Abstract:

Guidance programs have received significant attention from researchers and therapists. It has thus become a prominent feature of psychological services programs. Planning and implementing it has become an essential skill for counselors or psychological specialists, given its significant impact in finding solutions to many psychological, social, and academic problems. Based on this, we will attempt, through this intervention, to shed light on guidance programs in terms of their concept, characteristics, and features. We will then address the theoretical foundations for constructing guidance programs and the strategies used in them, adopting the descriptive approach because it is appropriate for such studies.

Keywords: Characteristics of guidance programs, design stages, guidance programs, school environment

1. Introduction

Psychological guidance is one of the services that aim to help the individual to achieve self-realization and develop his abilities and capabilities so that he can solve his problems and achieve psychological, social and personal harmony. Educational institutions, especially the university, have begun to provide psychological guidance services in the form of programs. "Hence, the need has become essential and fundamental to provide reliable sources for the purpose of opening new horizons for students and trainees to familiarize them with modern guidance methods in guidance practice

and to present guidance programs through realistic models of some of the problems that some individuals in society are exposed to, while providing appropriate solutions for them” (Riyadh Nayel Al-Amsi, 2015, p. 10).

It is notable that guidance programs have recently occupied a distinguished position in terms of their ability to identify the problems that individuals suffer from, their causes, and the factors that contributed to their emergence. Hence, it has become necessary for those practicing the guidance profession to possess various basic knowledge and skills to design and implement these programs and to develop guidance plans appropriate for individuals and groups that need these services.

Through this intervention, we will attempt to shed light on the subject of designing guidance programs in terms of the concept, characteristics, theoretical foundations for their construction, and the strategies used in them.

Study Questions: Through this study, we will attempt to answer the following questions:

- What is the concept of guidance programs?
- What are the most important features and characteristics related to guidance programs?
- What are the theoretical foundations for developing guidance programs?
- What are the strategies used in guidance programs?

2- The importance of the study:

- The current study derives its importance from the importance of its topic, which is the development of guidance programs and the need for them to identify certain psychological, educational, and social problems, their causes, and the factors that contribute to their emergence in some individuals.
- Providing counselors, psychologists, university students, and some academics with a general and simplified framework for guidance programs and the basic theoretical

objectives:foundations for constructing them correctly and effectively.

3- Study objectives:

- Understand the concept and nature of guidance programs.
- Identify the most important features and characteristics related to developing guidance programs.
- Present the theoretical foundations for developing guidance programs.
- Address the strategies used in guidance programs.

4- Study method:

The current study followed the descriptive approach, which focuses on describing the various aspects related to the subject of guidance programs. This approach represents a reliable method for obtaining accurate information about the phenomenon under study.

5-Procedural concepts of study terms:

-Guidance programs: By procedural terms, we mean a set of steps and procedures based on scientific and methodological foundations, with specific objectives and a specific timeframe, including a set of activities given to individuals to help them overcome the problems they face.

Characteristics of guidance programs: We mean by this procedurally the set of scientific features and conditions that must be present in guidance programs during their planning and implementation.

Theoretical Framework:

1- Definition of the Guidance Program:

Before presenting definitions related to the guidance program, we should begin by defining the program as a term and concept.

Saadia Bahar defines the program as "all the activities, practices, games, situations, visits, and trips that a child undertakes in the educational transition from the self to the outside world. Therefore, the experience must begin with an experience from which many basic concepts emerge that informs the child's self." The program is also defined as: "A set of specific and organized steps based primarily on the theories, techniques, and principles of psychological guidance. It includes a set of different experiences, skills, and activities that are provided to individuals over a specific period of time, with the aim of helping them modify their behaviors and acquire new behaviors and skills that will lead them to achieve psychological harmony and help them overcome the problems they face in the struggle of life" (Taha Abdel-Azim Hussein, 2011, pp. 282-283).

Among the definitions related to the term "program," Al-Zahran defines the guidance program as "a planned, organized program in light of practical foundations for providing direct and indirect guidance services, individually and collectively, to all those included in the school" (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 499).

Al-Dosari defined the guidance program as "planned and organized on sound scientific foundations, consisting of a group of direct and indirect guidance services that provide services to all those included in the school, in order to achieve healthy growth and social and professional compatibility. This program is planned and implemented by a team of qualified and specialized professionals."

Al-Janabi defines it as "a planned and organized design based on scientific foundations and containing a group of services to solve the problems faced by students in various economic, academic, social and psychological fields, which leads to their academic success and their compatibility with the environment such as the educational institution (the school, for example) with the aim of helping them achieve healthy growth and make conscious, rational choices and to achieve psychological compatibility within the institution." (The school, for example) and outside it, and it is planned, implemented and evaluated by a committee and a team of

officials and qualified people. (Ahmed Younis Al-Bajari, 2009, p. 42).

It is also known as: “The organized plan that provides direct guidance services, individually and collectively, to those seeking guidance with the aim of helping them achieve their comprehensive and integrated growth in various fields” (Youssef Al-Najma Alaa El-Din and Musharraf Atef Othman Al-Agha, 2008, p. 67).

It is also known as “a planned and organized program in light of scientific foundations to provide direct and indirect guidance services individually and collectively to all those included in the institution (such as the school, for example) with the aim of helping them achieve healthy growth and make conscious, rational choices and achieve psychological harmony within and outside that institution. It plans and implements the guidance program” (Sami Muhammad Malham, 2008, p. 165).

As for Sisban (2017, p. 122), he defines the guidance program as a planned and organized scientific plan based on the foundations of psychological guidance theories, techniques, and principles, to provide a set of guidance services to those seeking guidance during a specific period of time, with the aim of helping them achieve psychological and educational compatibility and overcome life problems.

From the above definitions, we can deduce a number of features and characteristics related to the guidance program, the most important of which are:

- Organization and planning: The guidance and training program must have an organized strategy planned by experts who possess scientific and practical experience in the field of guidance program design. Planning and organization include covering the elements of the guidance program in terms of its introduction, setting goals, selecting target individuals, and the steps of its implementation, so that no stage precedes another.

- Flexibility: This means that the program is not fixed in terms of the sessions and techniques used in it, but rather it is flexible and subject to modification in light of new developments and

circumstances that arise in the guidance process and the surrounding environment, and the emergency changes that occur to the client, such as illness or sudden improvement.

- **Comprehensiveness:** meaning that comprehensiveness in the program does not cancel the program when it is part of the problem, but rather it must be comprehensive of all its social, psychological and emotional dimensions, and comprehensiveness includes appropriate measurement tools, techniques and other basic elements in the program.

-**Integration:** meaning that the program elements should be integrated with the data that was collected, and then they should be organized and integrated within the personality in its time, historical, dynamic, and current unity.

- **Objectivity:** The program must be objective in terms of the theory on which the counselor's view of the problem is based, the tools and standards for examination, diagnosis, and evaluation of the guidance techniques used, the counselor's and others' judgments on the entire psychological guidance process, and the cultural frame of reference in which the program is applied (Sami Muhammad Malham, 2008, p. 265).

-So that the results obtained by the program are appropriate to the social environment, including its authentic social lists and customs.

- **Accuracy and ease of application:** meaning that the program must be precise in defining its objectives, its progress, and the interpretation of its results, and that its procedures must be easy to apply by the psychological counselor and the mentally disabled person who is able to understand and assimilate them without the slightest difficulty.

- **Generalizability:** the possibility of applying it, if the necessary conditions are met, to individuals suffering from the same problem that the program addresses.

2- Theoretical foundations for developing guidance programs:

Guidance programs are based on a set of theoretical foundations and principles, the most important of which are:

1.2- General Foundations:

Human behavior is characterized by relative stability and predictability, and its flexibility for modification, expression, personality regulation, and the development of a positive self-concept.

Human behavior is both individual and social behavior, regardless of whether it is purely individual or purely social. When the individual is alone, the influence of the group and his behavior becomes apparent, and when he is with the group, the effects of his personality and individuality become apparent. This also applies to people whose behavior is influenced by their personal characteristics and by the standards, trends, and social roles that affect it. Each of us has a willingness to be guided and advised based on a basic need we have, which is our need for guidance and advice in order to confront and solve problems.

The process of guidance and counseling continues throughout the individual's life and is not defined by stages. Rather, it begins in the family before the child enters school and continues on the school benches, in university and in the laboratory. It is continuous and consecutive from childhood to old age. Therefore, the guidance process seeks to provide preventative and therapeutic services on the one hand, and developmental services on the other hand (Sami Muhammad Malham, 2008, p. 166).

2.2- Philosophical Foundations:

The philosophical foundations relate to human nature and the ethics of psychological guidance. These foundations were summarized by Beck as follows: Concern for the individual, respect for their self-worth, affirmation of their dignity and worth, and a focus on maximizing their potential, fulfilling their needs, liberating their will, and developing their experiences and attitudes (Salima Saihi, 2008, p. 26).

Observing the ethics of psychological guidance, which include knowledge and experience, licensing, oath, confidentiality of information, professional relationships, dedicated work, working as a team, respecting colleagues' expertise, mutual stimulation, referral, and the dignity of the profession.

3.2- Psychological and Educational Foundations:

The psychological and educational foundations upon which school guidance programs are based relate to individual and gender differences and can be summarized as follows:

- Taking into account individual differences between individuals (quantitatively and qualitatively), and between the sexes physiologically, physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally.
- Taking into account the characteristics of growth at each age stage in terms of the importance of achieving them and the danger of not achieving them at similar growth stages.
- Addressing the individual's psychological and social needs.

4.2- Social Foundations:

Relates to the social foundations of the individual, the group, and the resources of society, as follows:

- Concern for the individual as a member of a group influenced by it.
- Introducing the individual to the social life surrounding him and how to deal with it by establishing exemplary social relationships.

5.2- Religious Foundations:

Religion is fundamental to all aspects of psychological guidance. Healthy growth includes religious development and the achievement of mental health. Religious and moral values represent sacred standards for human behavior. Respect for religious and moral values by both counselor and client leads to the success and continuity of the guidance process.

6.2- Neurological and Physiological Foundations:

The neurological and physiological foundations relate to the nervous system, the senses, and other body systems. They are as follows:

- Taking into account the mutual influence between the physical and psychological aspects, by ensuring that the body is performing

all its functions and is free of physical and organic diseases. (Salima Saihi 2008, p. 27).

-The guide ensures that the senses are intact, as they are considered a primary observatory for the nervous system.

Each of these areas includes numerous guidance activities and services that intertwine to form a comprehensive and integrated program (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 290).

3- Steps for planning the guidance program:

The first characteristic of a psychological guidance program is planning. Therefore, the program's planning must be given extreme care and carried out by the guidance committee, not by a single individual. The planning and organization of the program must be precise, based on psychological, educational, and administrative foundations, and must grow and develop in accordance with the needs of the individuals for whom it is being planned.

Program planning must be realistic and within the available and achievable capabilities. This means that the planning process must be accessible, present, and approachable, emphasizing the possible rather than the impossible and ideal.

The program planning steps are summarized as follows:

1.3- Defining the program objectives:

In accordance with the general philosophy and scientific plan of the place where it is implemented, and in general, from the school, for example, the program is planned so that its goals are consistent with the educational goals, such as education and the satisfaction of psychological, social, cultural and professional needs...etc. and facilitating the possibilities to achieve these goals. It is noted that the goals of the psychological guidance program in the school differ relatively from the goals of a program in a juvenile institution. Even a program in an elementary school is different from a program in a high school, a university college, or a school for the blind...and so on (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 503).

2.3- Determining the means and methods to achieve the goals:

In order for the guidance program to succeed and achieve its goals, it needs to use means, methods and techniques that help in implementing the program, including books, models, lectures, discussions, pictures, modeling, trips, homework, role-playing, stories, coloring, drawing, sports activities, computers and various display devices. The tests and measures required for the program are also identified and prepared to be in line with their interests and inclinations.

3.3- Identifying existing and required capabilities:

This refers to the available capabilities and the missing capabilities that must be provided (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 503).

4.3- Determining the Program Budget:

When planning a guidance program, the funding sources or budget required to implement it must be determined. A guidance program costs millions for equipment, tests, devices, salaries, bonuses, and other expenses. Therefore, the budget must be carefully calculated and not exaggerated, limiting it to psychological requirements (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, pp. 503-505).

It is worth to mention that our school lacks organized and planned guidance programs in light of scientific foundations (Salima Saihi, 2004, p. 28).

5.3- Defining Services:

The services provided by the program must be continuous, comprehensive, and integrated with each other.

6.3- Defining the broad steps for program implementation:

This includes the basic steps and priorities, defining the beginnings and ends, and the timeframe for implementation. This is essential to avoid slipping into sub-projects that may not lead to the goal. Implementation steps and procedures must be coordinated so that they do not conflict.

7.3- Determining the procedures for evaluating the guidance program:

The purpose of evaluation, which includes preparing the necessary tools for evaluation and follow-up, is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the methods and approaches used and the extent to which the program achieves its objectives.

8.3- Taking precautions to address problems:

Necessary measures and procedures must be taken to address any problems that may arise to overcome any obstacles that may hinder program implementation (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 504).

9.3- Defining the Administrative Structure:

Defining the administrative structure is one of the steps in planning, organizing, and supervising the program, and in preparing and involving the largest possible number of responsible specialists who are enthusiastic about setting the objectives. To implement the program to achieve its objectives, it is necessary to identify the potential for involving external stakeholders, such as parents, employers, and therapists (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran, 2002, p. 504).

Sisban summarizes the aforementioned steps as follows:

- Identifying the needs of the counselors:

This means identifying the needs of the target group in the study, determining the guidance assistance they require, and prioritizing them. This is achieved through the use of various data collection tools, such as questionnaires, interviews, and subsequent observation. (Fatima Al-Zahraa Sisban, 2017, p. 125).

- Defining objectives:

The objectives of the guidance program are determined in light of educational objectives that seek to satisfy the psychological and social needs of the counselors, given the available financial and human resources.

- Determining the means to implement the program:

This means identifying the means that serve the program, in light of the available capabilities.

- Identifying the capabilities available in the local environment:

Determine the budget required to implement the program in light of existing and required resources and capabilities, and identify funding sources to cover program expenses.

- Setting the program's implementation structure and schedule:

This refers to defining the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the program's implementation, evaluation, and follow-up, including members of the guidance team, the educational institution's administrative and educational team, and participants from outside the school. This includes a timetable that sets the time for implementation of each phase.

- Program implementation:

Program sessions are implemented with the target group according to carefully planned steps. (Fatima Zahra Sisban, 2017, p. 126).

-Program evaluation:

The program evaluation aims to determine the effectiveness of the guidance program in achieving the objectives, by measuring the changes that occur among the members of the guidance group after implementing the program compared to before. This is useful in judging the adequacy of the services and procedures provided and its strengths and weaknesses, and thus correcting and correcting what has been proven to be deficient, and developing the program as much as possible so that it returns the maximum benefit to the members concerned with it. (Fatima Zahra Sisban, 2017, p. 127).

4- Strategies used in guidance programs:

The person implementing the guidance program must follow one of the following strategies:

1.4- Individual Guidance:

Individual guidance refers to guide one client face-to-face at a time. Its effectiveness depends primarily on the professional guidance relationship between the counselor and the client. This relationship takes place within the context of reality, in light of symptoms, and within the boundaries of personality and developmental aspects (Sami Muhammad Malham, 2008, p. 260).

It is also known as: a type of guidance method used by the counselor to reach the problem that the gifted and normal client is suffering from, and it is face-to-face in all stages of guidance and the client, meaning it is a planned relationship between the two parties and takes place within the framework of norms and within the limits of personality.

Abu Asaad defines it as the planned relationship between the counselor and the student, where one individual is guided face-to-face in guidance sessions. Some specialists consider dealing with two or three people to be individual therapy. Individual guidance is considered the focal point for multiple activities in all guidance programs. (Ahmed Abdel Latif Abu Asaad, 2009, p. 123).

Individual guidance: is an interactive, reciprocal relationship between two people, one of whom is the counselor who specializes in psychological guidance and the person being counseled who suffers from a problem that he cannot reach a solution for on his own, so he resorts to asking for help and assistance to get rid of the problem that prompted him to come to the counselor (Sabry Bardan Ali Al-Hayani, 2011, p. 66).

Individual guidance has several benefits, including:

- Providing an opportunity to speak with a psychologist and discuss the difficulties or problems they face.
- The psychologist helps the student identify specific goals to work toward through the guidance process.
- The psychologist helps the student explore the available options and choose the most appropriate one.
- Individual guidance aims to enable the individual to understand and address their personal, social, and professional problems.

- Short-term individual guidance.
- Coordination between the counselor and the client, including guidance sessions and session duration (Ahmed Abdel Latif Abu Asaad, 2009, p. 191).
- Exchange of information and stimulating the client's motivation.

2.4- Micro-guidance:

Also called brief or intensive, short-term guidance, it is based on micro-training, teaching basic counseling skills in segments. This facilitates focusing on one skill at a time. The client masters the skills one by one (one skill per session), building a skill base for use in real-life situations.

Therefore, a micro-guidance program can be defined as “a planned and organized program based on scientific principles, applied to those who need it, such as students in schools. It defines responsibilities for planning, implementation, and evaluation, and determines the responsible parties, including counselors, teachers, and parents of students, and contracts with them.” (Amina Yassin, 2011, p. 67)

It is also defined as a type of psychological guidance that aims to provide the greatest guidance assistance to the client in the shortest possible time. It uses micro-training techniques and focuses on teaching the client specific behavioral skills and training them to master and apply them one after the other, with training being limited to one skill in each guidance session (Ahmed Mohammed Al-Zoubi, 2014, p. 152).

Its importance lies in what it achieves among those seeking guidance, which is:

- Teaching them specific behavioral skills that improve the educational process, thus preventing academic failure and reducing school dropout. It also reduces study anxiety and exam anxiety.
- Enables interaction among group members, which reduces clients' feelings of helplessness, loneliness, or fear.
- These specialized study skills training programs have a positive impact on students' behavior, attitudes toward study,

- study habits, the learning process, academic achievement, self-esteem, social acceptance, and student competencies.
- They provide services focused on prevention and promote the healthy development of all students.
 - It saves time and effort for the counselor.
 - Group guidance is suitable for certain age groups, especially adolescents, as it allows them to meet their needs and express their feelings and thoughts in a social and friendly atmosphere, given the spontaneous, interactive nature of the group.
 - It motivates counselees to commit and not abandon the group, which helps ensure smooth implementation of the guidance program. (Yassin, 2011: 67-68)

3.4- Group counseling:

It means implementing the guidance service through a group of individuals, that is, it is a guidance relationship between the guide and a group of those being guided that takes place through group sessions in one place where they are similar in the type of problem they suffer from and express it each according to his point of view and way of thinking based on his vision of it and how to treat it (Emad Muhammad Muhammad Attia, 2013, p. 13).

Group guidance is used in several situations, including the following:

The benefits of group guidance extend to people of all ages and genders, but the type of problems and situations in which it is presented must be taken into account, in addition to the individual's attitudes toward this treatment method. We can identify the cases in which group guidance is used, namely:

- Providing advice to parents on how to deal with their children and avoid incorrect parenting practices.
- Guiding entire families when problems escalate, such as family disintegration resulting from separation, divorce, or quarrels between spouses.
- People experiencing personal difficulties and problems in relationships, whether in work or marital relationships.
- Cases of abnormality and deviation.

- Cases of vocational and educational guidance, professional problems, and achieving compatibility between the individual and his profession, which strengthens the relationship in all areas of production.
- Treatment of cases of introversion, isolation, and loss of self-confidence, in order to equip them with the social skills to solve their problems (Kamal Youssef Balan, 2015, p. 597)

Group counseling has several characteristics, the most important of which are:

- Age: It is preferable for the group to be of similar ages, otherwise the discussion will be weakened and the potential for a sense of belonging will be diminished.
- Mental capacity: Intelligence should be taken into consideration to avoid isolating those with lower levels of intelligence and culture, leading to feelings of isolation and alienation.
- Gender: It is preferable for members to be of the same gender.
- Common problems: A group with a shared problem helps members feel a sense of belonging and understanding, as a heterogeneous group fails to grow toward achieving the intended outcomes (Abu Asaad, 2009, p. 131).
- Time: It is essential that the student has extra time and that it does not conflict with other responsibilities at school in order to interact positively with the group, and that the meeting takes place during class.
- Avoid all friends and relatives of the students in the guidance group, as it is impossible to discuss the problem freely.
- Mutual trust: Keeping what goes on between group members completely confidential, and prohibiting discussion outside the group (Abu Asaad, 2009, p. 131).

It also has four (04) important benefits: confidence, openness, a sense of independence, and self-determination.

- Confidence: This refers to the group member's increased confidence in themselves, others, and the world around them.

- Openness: This refers to the guidance group member opening more channels of communication with others in a deeper way. An open person interacts with their surroundings through their inner self, which allows them to express themselves and their feelings to others honestly, without affectation or superficiality.

- Feeling independent: Independence here does not mean being far from people or not needing them, but rather what we mean here is that feeling of being able to be independent while at the same time depending to some extent on others and living with them.

Self-determination: Groups work to increase the member's awareness of himself and to increase his ability to recognize and define what he wants. This leads to him recognizing the extent of the match or difference between his actual image and the ideal image that he seeks to achieve (Hamed Abdel Salam Zahran 2003, p. 21).

Conclusion:

we can say that guidance programs are a planned, organized, and purposeful process, based on scientific foundations and theoretical principles from which they derive their origins in planning, construction, and implementation. In order for guidance programs to effectively achieve the objectives for which they were designed, guidance workers must have the training and experience, adopt appropriate guidance methods, pay attention to each stage of planning and implementation, and also attach importance to the program evaluation process to determine the extent to which the desired results or behaviors have been achieved.

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