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A Training Program Enhancing Occupational Performance of Counseling Diploma Students in Al- Qassim University

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to examine the effectiveness of a training program to enhance the occupational performance of school counselors. The program was conducted on a sample of 60 students for the school Counseling and Guidance Diploma in Al-Qassim University. The sample was divided into an experimental and a control group. The research measurement was a scale of occupational performance of a school counselor. Following the application of occupational performance enhancement training program (researcher training), it was clear that there are statistically significant differences indicating the effectiveness of the program in enhancing the occupational performance of school counselors in the experimental group compared to the control. No statistically significant differences were found in the performance of school counselors according to gender. However, there are some differences attributed to experience in the performance of school counselors whose experience exceeded 15 years.

Keywords: Occupational Performance, Student Counselor, Training Program.

INTRODUCTION

Theoretical Domain and Previous Studies

School counseling has great importance in the educational process, since it gives concern to students' physical, psychological, mental, emotional, religious, occupational, social and educational sides and helps them enhance them. For this reason school counseling has become one of the basics of modern schools in contemporary communities. It aims to achieve psychological, social, family and academic adjustment for educated people of different ages with diverse specializations, personalities and cultures (Al-Sahal, 1999).

A school counselor needs to develop him/herself and his/her counseling skills that enable him/her to diagnose and define the roots and causes of a problem and try to solve it. To ensure counselors have these competences, it is necessary to test their performance in coping with developments in schools, in line with the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. There are some problems of school counseling, such as school counseling objectives being unclear to some counselors, unqualified counselors and inadequate planning. A challenge is posed by the large number of students compared to the number of counselors in school, lack of continuous occupational follow-up and tools of work such as diagnostic tests, the restrictions of the school counselor services to students' educational problems only, lack of support from the administration and the surroundings, and negative attitudes of some principals, teachers and parents towards the counseling process.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia gave concern to school counseling decades ago. The Minister of Education issued a decree NO. 216/K on 20/8/1981 that replaced the Social Educational Administration by the General Administration of Guidance and Counseling to undertake the responsibilities of planning, supervision, following up, evaluating specialized programs and setting the rules that organize the work and define the nature of school counseling programs in the Saudi schools (Abu- Abu-Abah, and Niazy, 2001). The General Administration of Guidance and Counseling assigned school counselors the role of applying guidance and counseling programs in school. It also gave concern to occupational training and

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preparation of school counselors. Moreover, recently it has sought to provide certain training to school counselors to help them perform their roles efficiently and effectively.

Thus, it is important to consider the training and preparation of school counselors, as mentioned in the study of Zaghaleel and Al-Shera'ah (1988), who called for counselors to be trained and provided with the skills and abilities required for counseling students. The study also focused on providing counselors with psychological and occupational tests and teaching them how to conduct them. It also showed that this role is the least practiced one, in spite of its importance in the counseling process.

In this context, Richard (2010) pointed to the importance of training programs that modify incorrect and improper roles performed by school counselors in school. Good counseling depends on clarifying roles. Therefore, role evaluation is an important step in counseling success and overcoming problems. The multiple roles that the school psychological counselor should perform include collecting information about the clients, namely students who need counseling, meeting them, using psychological tests and scales, diagnosing objectives, counseling students individually and in groups, designing, applying and evaluating counseling programs, discussing them with specialists, and holding meetings and conferences about cases. (Derek, Miller, and Carroll, 2011) add other responsibilities and roles to counselors; preparing preventive programs, counseling teachers, parents, presenting psychological and educational advices to them as well as conducting scientific researches.

So, It is clear that a school counselor's training and qualification is necessary for his/her preparation and occupational development that enable him/her to perform the duties and tasks assigned to him/her accurately and properly. This study, therefore, investigates the effect of counselors' participation in authoring a school counseling training program to express their requirements.

The following is a review of recent studies that focused on preparing programs to improve the performance of school counselors. Brigman's study (2012) aimed at identifying the effectiveness of a comprehensive counseling program in performance improving and developing some counseling skills of a randomly chosen sample of 29 fresh graduates 14 male and 15 female counselors from Florida, one of the United States. The counseling program takes 5 weeks. Each session takes 45 minutes. Counseling skills measures were applied before and after the counseling program that includes three dimensions; occupational, personal and social dimension. The study results showed improvement of the performance of the school counselors. The study results indicated that there were insignificant differences between counselors of the study sample that was due to sameness in their surrounding, experience and the program content. Then after three months the results showed improvement counseling skills of participants of the study sample in holding meeting with students either individually or in groups. This in turn affects students' achievement, behavior, academic and social skills.

Al-Sharifain (2011), in his study in Jordan, referred to the effectiveness of a training program that follows the cognitive model to reduce anxiety of counselors and improve their performance. The study sample consisted of 60 male and female students of the third and fourth year of the *Department* of *Educational* and *Counseling* Psychology in Yarmouk University who were enrolled in courses of psychological counseling skills techniques and field training. They were randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group subjected to a training program and a control one subjected to traditional teaching methodologies. The study results show that the level of performance anxiety of the experimental group students was statistically lower than that of students of the control group. It also shows statistically significant differences in behavior attributed to the interaction between group and gender, school year and gender, and among group, school year and gender. There were significant differences in the cognitive domain attributed to the interaction of group, school year and gender. Statistically significant differences were found between the mean administration of the anxiety performance scale as a whole attributed to group, interaction between group and gender, school year and gender, and between group, school year and gender.

Al-Qara'an's study (2010) aimed at identifying the effectiveness of a counseling program in performance improving and developing some counseling skills of a randomly chosen sample of 69 male and female counselors from Irbid Directorate of Education in Jordan. The sample was divided into two groups; experimental and control. Counseling skills measures were applied before and after a counseling program of 20 sessions. The study results showed improvement of performance, and communication skills, problem- solving, time

management of school counselors of the experimental group. The study results indicated that there were insignificant differences between counselors of the experimental and control groups attributed to interaction between academic qualifications and counseling program, gender and counseling program, and experience period and counseling program.

Shaheen (2010) attempted to review the performance of counselors as perceived by school principals and counselors. It identified the most influential obstacles that impede school counselors' performance of their tasks. It also indicated how the identification of the importance of a counselor performance differed according to both principals and counselors in terms of academic qualification and experience. A questionnaire was distributed to all governmental schools in Ramallah and Al-Bira governorates in which there are educational counselors. The study showed an obvious difference in the views of principals and counselors in defining the primary and secondary tasks of counselors. However there was less difference in identifying the main obstacles facing counselors in performing their tasks. The main obstacles were the lack of appropriate incentives for counselors, specialized school counselors, a general counseling plan, and a strategy to identify the role and powers of school counselors. The study also showed statistically significant differences related to experience, educational level, and the interaction of all these factors in school counselors' performance of their tasks. This interaction was not statistically significant in the field of experience and educational degree.

Mullis' study (2010) conducted 21 researches that formed the study sample. These researches handled that help improve the effectiveness of school counseling that affects school counselor's performance in the study field. The study showed that these programs had a great role in improving the performance of school counselors, developing their experiences and performance in helping and advising teachers, preventing high school students' running away and reducing disorders in classes.

Abu-Yusuf's study (2008) aimed at identifying the level of counseling skills in the Relief and Works Agency schools in Gaza, revealing the effectiveness of a suggested training program to develop the counseling skills and investigating the impact of some variables such as gender, specialization, years of experience and university background. The study sample included 11 randomly selected male and female counselors. They were photographed by video during counseling sessions with clients to identify the level of their counseling skills, as a pre-test. After completion of the study programs, they were photographed again during counseling sessions, as a post-test. The main results of the study were that training was helpful in developing and supporting counseling skills of participants. There were no differences in the pre and post test results attributed to gender, but there were differences attributed to years of experience.

Al-Ma'arouf and Al-Hadethi (2003) in their study investigated the effect of a training program on the development of the performance of school counselors. The study sample consisted of 20 female school counselors divided into two groups; an experimental and a control group. This represents 7% of the case study community. The study used four scales to collect information needed to evaluate the skills of questioning, listening, summarization and interpretation. It took 15 days to administer the program. Then audiovisual recordings were submitted after the experiment to three experts individually. To validate it statistically, the total scores of each skill of the two scales, pre and post administration, were accounted. The experimental group's scores were higher in the post administration in all the four mentioned skills.

Kocarek (2001) tried to understand the relation between self efficacy in counseling, anxiety, development standard, years of experience and the performance of a school counselor. The study sample consisted of 117 M.A students in school counseling. After evaluating the study variables; (anxiety, development standard of a counselor, courses, and years of experience) and the performance of a counselor, the results showed that all these variables influence the performance of a counselor. The study also indicated that self efficacy is an important variable in the performance of a counselor.

Of the previous studies, several highlighted the importance of training in promoting counselors' performance and providing them with the skills for developing the counseling process, such as Brigman (2012), Al-Sharifain (2011), Al-Qar'an (2010), Mullis (2010), Abu Yusuf (2008) and Al-Ma'arouf and Al-Hadethi (2003). On the other hand some studies focused on the performance of school counselors and its relation with demographer and other variables, e.g Shaheen (2010), and Al-Kernez (2001).

Research Hypotheses

1. There are statistically significant differences between the pre and post-training mean scores of the experimental group counselors according to the occupational performance measure in favor of post-training.
2. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control group counselors according to the occupational performance post-training scale in favor of the experimental group.
3. There are no statistically significant differences between-the mean scores of the experimental and control group counselors according to the occupational performance post-training scale in favor of the experimental group attributed to the variable of gender and experience.

Study Objective

Identifying the differences in the effect of training program and its effectiveness on the experimental group in improving the occupational performance of a school counselor.

The Importance of the Study

A psychological school counselor has a very important role as s/he is a specialized person who performs school guidance and counseling. A counselor should therefore have the required efficiency and skills to deal with students who need counseling and help them overcome the problems that impede their school adjustment and hold them back from achieving their goals. This means counselors should be aware of the approaches and skills that can enable them to do their job. Hence a counselor's success depends on accuracy and disposition and well-planned counseling should be based on certain principles and objectives that govern its procedures (Al-Asadi and Ibrahim, 2003).

Hence, it is necessary to enhance the performance of a school counselor who has a positive impact on student's achievement and creativity; there should be courses, seminars, workshops and specialized sessions. Besides, training should be offered through applicable programs that can improve the performance of a school counselor.

The program of this study helps a school counselor understand his/her role and how to perform and apply developmental and preventive programs paying attention to preventive counseling. A counseling program should handle all counseling and guidance fields as well as students' problems and affairs. It also prepares a guiding plan that considers the privacy of the community, the number of students and the school surroundings and circumstances, these objectives of the plan should be clear and achievable. This program defines the concept and basics of counseling and guidance that helps a school counselor perceive that a student's behavior could be modified, counseling should be based on guidance theories and handling psychological and mental sides should be within a scientific frame. It also helps a school counselor perceive that the dimensions and circumstances of a counseling relation should be based on mutual confidence, understanding and acceptance.

This study is important from the theoretical and practical aspects.

First: The theoretical aspect:

- It tries to reveal to what extent it could be possible for counselors, subjected and responding to training, to be affected by it.
- It also tries to reveal the effects of the techniques used in the training program on the performance of school counselors.
- Second: The practical aspect:
- Preparing an occupational performance measure for school counselors.
- Developing a training program to improve school counselors' occupational performance.
- Collecting information about training techniques, ways and strategies that can be used to improve the occupational performance of school counselors.

Definition of Terms

Training Program

It is an organized planned design in terms of theories, techniques and basics of psychological counseling. It involves some training sessions that contribute in enhancing a school counselor occupational performance. The program involves some activities and educational experiences employed to achieve a number of assumed goals. The present study defines the training program as a work plan including specific skills that can be applied in certain activities, divided into 14 training sessions. Each session takes from 60 to 90 minutes. A training program is procedurally defined in the present study

Occupational Performance

It can be represented in the activities and behaviors that a counselor performs through the counseling process according to psychological theories and basics. It helps a student to achieve proper psychological, social and

educational development. It also identifies the problems that face students, helps them reveal the causes of these problems, take decisions, find solutions, achieve personal and social adjustment and accept him/ herself and others. It is procedurally determined by the score that a school counselor achieves in the occupational performance measure used in the present study.

A School Counselor

A highly academically qualified specialist appointed by the General Administration for Guidance and Counseling to design and apply guidance and counseling programs with all services in the governmental schools affiliated to the Ministry of Education.

Study Restrictions

Objective restrictions

The study is restricted to the responses of the individuals of the study sample according to the occupational performance measure of school counselors, prepared by the researcher.

Place Restrictions

The study is restricted to students enrolled in the Guidance and Counseling Diploma in Al-Qassim University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Time Restrictions

The training program of the study was applied during the second term of the scholastic year 2012-2013.

Procedures

Research Methodology

The study followed a quasi experimental design as indicated in the following profile:

Table (1)

The study design

Experimental Group	occupational performance scale pre-test	A school counselor performance enhancement training program	occupational performance scale post-test
Control Group	occupational performance scale pre-test	Not Implementing any programs	occupational performance scale post-test

Study Sample

The study scale validating sample involved 310 male and female students of the Guidance and Counseling Diploma in both Al-Qassim and Al-Majmaah Universities. All of them had a bachelor of science in Education, Islamic legislation, Arts and science and supposed to work as a school counselor, some of them had a work experience of more than 15 years as indicated in the following table:

Table (2)

Distribution of participants of the validating sample

N	University	Males	Females	Total
1	Qassim	135	35	170
2	Majmaah	140	-	140
Total				310

The main study sample involved male and female students of the Guidance and Counseling Diploma in Al-Qassim University, 170 in total. The procedures were as follows:

1. The researcher administered the occupational performance scale on the students of the main study sample.
2. Sample members were ranked in order based on their scores. Those who scored less than 60% of the total result were (60 male and female students) were divided into two groups, experimental and control. as indicated in the following table.

Table (3)

Distribution of the participants of the final sample and their sources

N	Group	Maless	Females	Total
1	Experimental	15	15	30
2	Control	15	15	30
Total				60

3- Gender, educational level and experience were taken into consideration while applying occupational performance scale of a school counselor.

The occupational performance scale of a school counselor (prepared by the researcher):

The researcher attempted to identify the effectiveness of a school counselor occupational enhancement training program. In order to find whether the level of counselor performance improved after joining the training program, the researcher developed a school counselor occupational performance scale. The scale identified the information and skills that a counselor possessed that would help him/her improve his/her occupational performance. Program effectiveness was determined by comparing pre training results and post training results. The following steps were applied in developing the occupational performance measure:

A review was undertaken of the theoretical domain, previous studies and researches related to occupational performance of school counselors, especially researches that developed related measures, such as measures of school counselor occupational performance as perceived by administrators and teachers, prepared by As-Salama, (2003), students' perception of the psychological counselor's role, prepared by Sahlab, (2007), psychological counselor counseling skills, prepared by Abu Yusuf (2008), psychological counselor performance prepared by Shoman, (2008) and educational counselor's role in school, prepared by Shaheen, (2010). All these measures were beneficial to the researcher in developing his measure, but he did not adopt any of them because most of them were designed to scale the performance and skills of either psychological counselors or educational counselors, not school counselors. They were also prepared from the point of view of school principals, teachers and students. Moreover, they did not reflect the Saudi environment.

The researcher observed the participants in a survey sample that involved students of the Deanship of Community Services and Continuing Education, Al-Qassim University, during an open meeting.

Several aspects were taken into consideration while phrasing the scale items to ensure that they would be understood and appropriate to the sample individuals. These considerations included; the item should be simple and easy, address a single idea or a single variable and the mentioned behaviors should be derived from a general experience that clients might have faced.

A preliminary version of the scale was developed including 80 items. This was submitted to 10 psychological counseling, psychological health and psychology professors in order to validate the appropriateness of the scale to its objective and to consult the professors about the accuracy of the scale items and instructions. Based on the panels' opinion 3 items were removed and 6 items were modified. The scale was submitted again to the panel of experts to validate the content. The percentage of agreement on the scale properties among the panel experts was calculated. Items that obtained 80% percent or higher agreement were considered valid and retained and so the total number of the scale items became 77.

Factorial Validity

The researcher conducted factor analysis as a statistical approach attempting to reduce a great number of items to the smallest number of meaningful factors. He conducted Hotelling Principal Component's analysis with Varimax rotation. Table (4) indicates the factorial rank of the items of the school counselor's occupational performance scale based on the scores of the validating group: (N=310) following Varimax rotation.

Table (4)

Factorial rank after administering Varimax Orthogonal Rotation, The scale of occupational performance of a school counselor

N	Factors						
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Six	Seven
1	0.408	0.271	0.211	0.224−	0.024	0.161	0.123
2	0.387	0.027−	0.181	0.009	0.169	0.178	0.201−
3	0.370	0.104	0.619	0.273	0.296	0.172	0.239
4	0.191	0.563	0.020	0.162	0.198	0.158	0.027
5	0.174	0.552	0.198	0.124	0.191	0.248	0.248
6	0.530	0.301	0.119	0.189	0.140−	0.107	0.178

N	Factors						
	First	**Second**	**Third**	**Fourth**	**Fifth**	**Six**	**Seven**
7	0.501	0.309	0.327	0.255−	0.002	0.186	0.300
8	0.148	0.167	0.433	0.151	0.199	0.192	0.139
9	0.273	0.246	0.598	0.126	0.111	0.126−	0.159
10	0.317	0.247	0.493	0.106	0.239	0.147	0.268
11	0.107	0.008	0.489	0.018	0.273	0.290	0.193
12	0.398	0.157	0.164	0.367	0.110	0.151	0.205
13	0.264	0.313	0.576−	0.228	0.078	0.285−	0.119
14	0.161	0.267	0.446	0.114−	0.346	0.166	0.026−
15	0.289	0.530−	0.182	0.106	0.166	0.229	0.178−
16	0.307	0.136	0.186	0.108−	0.187−	0.166	0,186
17	0.286	0.093	0.398−	0.266	0.081	0.141	0.281
18	0.161	0.522−	0.385	0.110−	0.267	0.210	0.274
19	0.366	0.117−	0.136	0.108	0.157	0.187−	0.026
20	0.240	0.263	0.601	0.182	0.274	0.129	0.212−
21	0.333	0.207	0.497	0.138	0.294	0.097	0.151−
22	0.200	0.113	0.354	0.180	0.125	0.169−	0.119
23	0.147	0.500	0.250	0.137	0.299	0.027	0.007
24	0.301	0.181	0.127	0.022	0.197	0.158	0.295
25	0.138	0.095	0.397	0.296	0.121−	0.224	0.134
26	0.330	0.599	0.134	0.145	0.159	0.246	0.054
27	0.118	0.125	0.562	0.101	0.299	0.154	0.275
28	0.127	0.482	0.063	0.170−	0.134	0.168	0.112−
29	0.280−	0.477	0.138	0.252	0.287−	0.174−	0.132−
30	0.19	0.354	0.211−	0.157	0.125−	0.257	0.141−
31	0.199	0.513−	0.238−	0.211	0.046	0.256−	0.132
32	0.156	0.164	0.009	0.234	0.202	0.189	0.025
33	0.486	0.028	0.166	0.124	0.161	0.175−	0.204
34	0.137	0.102	0.111	0.143	0.031	0.019	0.182
35	0.024	0.459	0.102−	0.026	0.239	0.253	0.066
36	0.189	0.529−	0.193	0.214	0.115	0.316	0.103
37	0.420	0.183−	0.135−	0.122−	0.293	0.267	0.138
38	0.060	0.592−	0.057	0.105−	0.163	0.105	0.241
39	0.322	0.144−	0.121−	0.178−	0.122	0.129	0.092
40	0.165	0.222	0.452−	0.158	0.111−	0.128	0.117
41	0.231	0.055	0.425	0.175	0.138	0.105	0.306
42	0.569	0.463	0.003	0.126	0.159	0.135	0.188
43	0.153−	0.444	0.200	0.289	0.111	0.250−	0.116
44	0.598	0.189	0.271	0.061	0.025	0.190	0.175
45	0.158	0.415−	0.020	0.179−	0.107	0.254	0.229
46	0.162	0.283	0.509	0.407	0.219	0.121	0.075
47	0.347	0.184	0.181	0.111	0.184	0.024−	0.053
48	0.035	0.403−	0.070−	0.210	0.136	0.085	0.027
49	0.370	0.127−	0.204−	0.169−	0.154−	0.094	0.003
50	0.628	0.247−	0.213	0.140	0.427	0.079	0.121
51	0.227	0.533	0.264	0.132	0.248	0.175	0.027

N	Factors						
	First	**Second**	**Third**	**Fourth**	**Fifth**	**Six**	**Seven**
52	0.173−	0.148	0.429	0.210	0.076	0.079	0.002
53	0.218	0.398	0.009	0.172	0.281	0.295	0.204
54	0.311	0.201	0.294	0.094	0.110	0.238−	0.231
55	0.221	0.322	0.214	0.272	0.131	0.149	0.073
56	0.288	0.427	0.157	0.289	0.171	0.024	0.026
57	0.319	0.125	0.021	0.315	0.098	0.121	0.141
58	0.198	0.267	0.342	0.229	0.204	0.193−	0.126−
59	0.300	0.041	0.118	0.127−	0.233	0.101−	0.104
60	0.170	0.333	0.048	0.143−	0.177	0.175	0.087
61	0.173	0.203	0.607	0.218	0.184	0.141	0.209
62	0.437	0.199−	0.233	0.133	0.027	0.082	0.109
63	0.191	0.466−	0.207	0.120−	0.236	0.143	0.261
64	0.187	0.282	0.309	0.308	0.091	0.009	0.198
65	0.328	0.122	0.027	0.063	0.139−	0.065	0.035
66	0.191	0.026	0.369	0.116−	0.079	0.025	0.112
67	0.185	0.518	0.047	0.238	0.074	0.186	0.174
68	0.305	0.026	0.153	0.131−	0.037	0.155−	0.029
69	0.136	0.197	0.419	0,237	0.339	0.153	0.0146−
70	0.270	−0.242	0.449	0.165	0.206−	0.082	0.172
71	0.161	0.491	0.178	0.186	0.157	0.071	0.283
72	0.173	0.493	0.195	0.024	0.146	0.259	0.028
73	0.472	0.133	0.157	0.116−	0.166	0.141	0.240
74	0.221	0.186	0.622	0.029	0.190	0.134	0.178
75	0.455	0.140	0.108	0.039	0.026	0.123	0.035
76	0.178	0.207	0.538	0.113	0.035	0.210	0.023
77	0.632	0.128	0.289	0.138	0.194	0.051	0.095

N	factors						
	first	*second*	*third*	*fourth*	*fifth*	*sixth*	*seventh*
Latent Root	7.881	2.917	2.638	2.480	2.368	2.051	1.043
Variance Percent	8.757	3.241	2.932	2.755	2.631	2.279	1.159
Statistically Loading Factors	29	28	26	4	3	1	2

In the analysis, items that had a loading of 30% or higher were considered statistically significant. Items that had a latent root number of (1) or higher were considered statistically significant. Items with loading less than 6 were ignored.

Reviewing table (4), factorial rank after conducting Varimax Orthogonal Rotation showed that there were some double-meaning loadings, such items were assigned to the factors with the higher loads for example item (3) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.370) and on the third factor with a score of (0.619), so it was included in the third factor where it the higher loading. Item (6) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.530) and on the second factor with a score of (0.302), so it was included in the first factor. Item (7) loaded on the first factor with score (0.501) and on the seventh factor with score (0.300), so it was included in the first factor. Item (10) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.317) and the on the third factor with a score of (0.493), so it was included in the third factor. Item (12) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.398) and on the fourth factor with a score of (0.367), so it was included in the first factor. Item (13) loaded on the second factor with a score of (0.313) and on the third factor with a score of (0.576), so it was included in the third factor. Item (14) loaded on the third factor with a score of (0.446) and on the fifth

factor with a score of (0.346), so it was included in the third factor. Item (18) loaded on the second factor with a score of (0.522) and on the third factor with a score of (0.385), so it was included in the second factor. Item (21) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.313) and on the third factor with a score of (0.497), so it was included in the third factor. Item (26) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.330) and on the second factor with a score of (0.559), so it was included in the second factor. Item (36) loaded on the second factor with a score of (0.529) and on the sixth factor with a score of (0.316), so it was included in the second factor. Item (41) loaded on the third factor with a score of (0.425) and on the seventh factor with a score of (0.306), so it was included in the third factor. Item (42) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.569) and on the second factor with a score of (0.463), so it was included in the first factor. Item (46) loaded on the third factor with a score of (0.509) and on the fourth factor with a score of (0.407), so it was included in the third factor. Item (50) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.628) and on the fifth factor with score (0.427), so it was included in the first factor. Item (57) loaded on the first factor with a score of (0.319) and the fifth factor with a score of (0.315), so it was included in the first factor. Item (64) loaded on the third factor with a score of (0.309) and the fourth factor with a score of (0.308), so it was included in the third factor. Item (69) loaded on the third factor with a score of (0.419) and on the fifth factor with a score of (0.339), so it was included in the third factor.

Items (32) and (34) did not load on any factor so they were removed. Thus the number of the scale items became (75).

Table (5)

Fundamental first factor loadings of the school counselor occupational performance scale

N	Item no	Statement	Factor Loading
1	77	I set a guidance and counseling program annually in my school	0.632
2	50	It is difficult for me to hold meetings with students	0.628
3	44	I counsel students with personal problems individually	0.598
4	42	I cannot perform my role during hardships	0.569
5	6	I follow up counseling strategies after administering them	0,530
6	7	I cannot conduct scales and psychological tests	0.501
7	33	I have the counseling skills required for my occupational performance	0.486
8	73	It is difficult for me to diagnose a problem	0.472
9	75	I adhere to career ethics and privacy	0.455
10	62	I refer difficult cases to specialized places	0.437
11	37	I can easily administer counseling sessions	0.420
12	1	It is difficult for me to recognize students with problems and diagnose their problems	0.408
13	12	I try to develop students' skills of self and behavior control	0,398
14	2	It is difficult to use counseling cognitive techniques with students	0.387
15	49	It is difficult to make periodical reports about counseling in school	0.370
16	19	I help a student to accept himself	0.366
17	47	I can use cognitive emotional behavioral therapy to modify students' irrational thoughts	0.347
18	65	I help students to overcome test anxiety problems	0.328
19	39	I develop students' study self motivation	0.322
20	57	It is difficult to inform teachers and parents about the best ways to deal with students' social and psychological problems	0.319
21	54	I participate in scientific conferences and seminars related to counseling	0.311
22	16	It is difficult to make the best change	0.307
23	68	I develop student qualities of persistence and hard work	0.305
24	24	I can use behavioral therapy techniques	0.301
25	59	I enhance the students' ability to take correct decisions in the appropriate time	0.300

Table 5 indicates that the 25 items of the first factor are included in one factor that evaluates the occupational field of counselors' occupational performance, including developing required counseling skills, diagnosing and overcoming student problems and adherence to career ethics and privacy.

Table (6)
Fundamental second factor loadings of the school counselor occupational performance scale

N	Item no	Statement	Factor Loading
1	26	I accept criticism and interact with critics	0.599
2	38	I cannot cooperate with local community social organizations	0.592
3	4	I try to meet the needs of students having problems with their parents	0.563
4	5	I cannot develop a connecting link between students and teachers	0.552
5	51	I advise students about the best ways to communicate with their colleagues	0.533
6	15	I try to find out about students' interests and hobbies	0.530
7	36	I cannot communicate with teachers and administrators to achieve counseling objectives	0.529
8	18	I help teachers to overcome students' problems	0.522
9	67	I have the ability to work in a team	0.518
10	31	It is difficult for me to identify students' with problems	0.513
11	23	I participate in school activities	0.500
12	72	I suffer from the unawareness of the school counselor's role in school	0.493
13	71	I encourage students to participate in school activities	0.491
14	28	I participate in designing social entertaining programs that suit students' interests and ages	0.482
15	29	I help students develop positive approaches towards the environment.	0.477
16	63	I help students be aware of the dangers associated with smoking and taking drugs and other social epidemics	0.466
17	35	I help students to express their feelings objectively	0.459
18	43	I try to diagnose the problem of some students avoiding out of class activities.	0.444
19	56	I try to find out the causes of students' absence and running away from school.	0.427
20	45	I develop the students' ability of teamwork	0.415
21	48	I advise students about the best ways to make use of their free time.	0.403
22	53	I attempt to modify students' immoderate thoughts	0.398
23	30	I try to spread awareness of psychological health in school	0.354
24	60	I face students' behaviors that impede community development	0.333
25	55	I help students to conform with their colleagues in school	0.322

Table (6) indicates that the 25 items of the second factor were included in one factor that evaluates the social field. The social field covers the counselor's performance in school and the local community, which includes: conforming with its components, participating in social programs, the ability to spread awareness of psychological health and modifying some students' immoderate thoughts.

Table (7) indicates that the 25 items of the third factor were included in one factor that evaluates the academic field. The academic field addresses the counselor's performance in treating and overcoming academic problems, participating in developing out of class activities, giving concern to both students and cooperating with teachers and parents.

Table (7)

Fundamental third factor loadings of the school counselor occupational performance scale

N	Item no	Statement	Factor Loading
1	3	I counsel students about the best ways to organize study time	0.619
2	74	I help students identify academic objectives and how to achieve them	0.622
3	61	I advise parents about the best ways of study at home	0.607
4	20	I try to find solutions to under achieving students	0.601
5	9	I participate in designing academic out of class programs	0.598
6	13	I try to reveal the causes of students' repeated failure in a subject and find solutions	0.576
7	27	I cannot care for gifted and talented students	0.562
8	76	I encourage students to participate in class discussions	0.538
9	46	I draw teachers' attention to the individual differences of students	0.509
10	21	I save students academic examination results in specific files	0.497
11	10	I help students plan for their future and choose the right institute, faculty or training courses	0.493
12	11	I counsel students with academic problems individually	0.489
13	40	I conduct research about new innovated aspects in the educational system	0.452
14	70	I prepare pamphlets for students, parents and teachers about study methods	0.449
15	14	I develop students' reading and comprehension skills	0.446
16	8	I advise students on the best ways to benefit from teacher explanation	0.433
17	52	I advise students on the best ways of studying	0.429
18	41	I discuss with teachers students' interests and academic problems	0.425
19	69	I help students to overcome lack of concentration and attention problem	0.419
20	17	I make use of school activities to enhance guidance and counseling services	0.398
21	25	I help students to overcome problems resulting from failure in an examination	0.397
22	66	I participate in developing therapeutic classes for students who could not obtain the minimum skill level	0.369
23	22	I inform parents about their children' educational level	0.354
24	58	I invite parents to participate in developing treatment programs for students with learning difficulties	0.342
25	64	I distribute a pamphlet to parents about the family's responsibility towards children	0.309

Table (8)

Correlation coefficient of the school counselor occupational performance scale

Factor	Occupational field	Social field	Academic field
Occupational field		0.642	0.684
Social field			0.510
Academic field			

Consistency

First: Internal Consistency

Table (8) indicates that the school counselor occupational performance scale has a strong internal consistency.

Second: Cronbach's alpha

The consistency of the scale was measured by Cronbach's Alpha, which showed that all the scale

dimensions have statistically significant consistency coefficients, ranging from (0.540 to 0.890). High Cronbach's Alpha indicates that a single dimension's items express one construct. The correlation coefficient of the total scale is 0.760, which indicates high internal consistency.

The school counselor performance enhancement training program

The program is based on

Studies and research that address this issue were reviewed in depth they include the study of Al-Amry (2004), which listed school counselor occupational training requirements, the study of Abu-Yusuf (2008) which developed a training program to enhance counseling skills for school counselors in the Relief and Works Agency schools in Gaza and the study of Zakout (2010) which suggested a representation to develop a practical educational training program for psychological counseling students in the Faculty of Education in Palestine.

Other input was informed by administration of the process generally in the Psychology Department, Faculty of Education, Al-Qassim University and particularly in the Guidance and Counseling Diploma, participating in preparing psychology, guidance and counseling courses, and taking part in planning, preparing and teaching in courses and workshops in order to enhance school counselors' performance.

General objective of the program:

- Performance enhancement of school counselors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Drawing school counselors' attention to the skills required for individual and group counseling sessions.
- Developing counseling skills of school counselors from two sides:
  - First: presenting necessary theoretical information about school counselors' work.
  - Second: providing practical and applicable training for school counselors to enhance their performance in counseling sessions.
- Developing a school counselor performance enhancement training program that can be used on a large scale.

Methods and Techniques Applied in the Program

These included introductory reviews, films, workshops, seminar, training tasks, self-assertion, modeling, role play and role reversal, and support.

Program Validity

The program was submitted to a panel of experts specialized in psychological counseling, psychology and psychological health. Their number was 10 and they were asked to validate the extent of appropriateness of each session to the counseled group and its assigned time. They were also asked to indicate modifications. About 80% of the panel members approved the validity of the program. Modification was restricted to grammatical structures, arranging time of sessions and some skills and techniques. On applying the required modifications and receiving agreement of the panel, the program arranged in 14 sessions with an assigned time of about 60 to 90 minutes. (See Appendices, Table 1)

Steps of the Research

1. The researcher administered the school counselor's occupational performance scale 310 male and female students of the Guidance and Counseling Diploma in Al-Qassim and Al-Majmaah universities, for validation purposes.
2. For the main study, the validated scale was administered to students of the Guidance and Counseling Diploma (170 male and female students). Participants were ranked based on the results. Students, who scored less than 60% of the total result (30 male and 30 female students), formed the final study sample and were divided into two groups, experimental and control.
3. The training program was delivered to the experimental group from 16/3/1433 till 6/5/1434 AH. The program was applied in two sessions weekly. Each session lasted for about 60 to 90 minutes.
4. After applying the program the researcher administered a post-test using the School Counselor's Performance scale.
5. Appropriate statistical tests such as arithmetic means, Standard deviation, T test and univariate analysis of variance were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

The results of the study

The results of the first hypothesis

The first hypothesis states that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group pre-administration of the school

counselor performance scale and their mean scores post-administration, in favor of post-administration scores.

In order to validate this, a paired sample T-Test was applied between the mean scores of the experimental group on various dimensions, in pre and post-administrations of the school counselor performance scale.

Table (9)

Arithmetic means, Standard deviation, paired sample T-Test values and the level of statistically significant differences between scores of the experimental group in pre and post-administration of the school counselor performance scale (N=30)

Factors	Implementing	Mean	Std. Dev	T	Sig.
Occupational field	Pre	45.03	7.87	13.539	0.001
	Post	67.30	4.37		
Social field	Pre	47.00	8.27	7.200	0.001
	Post	61.76	7.60		
Academic field	Pre	43.53	6.51	11.357	0.001
	Post	62.20	6.21		
Total degree	Pre	135.56	16.33	13.312	0.001
	Post	191.26	16.07		

Table (9) indicates that all T values are statistically significant at the 0.001 level, so there are statistically significant differences at a significance level of 0.001 between the experimental group's pre-administration mean scores and their post-administration mean scores on all dimensions of the scale and the total score of the scale, in favor of post-administration. The post-administration arithmetical means were higher than the pre administration means as follows:

(45.03/ 67.30) (47.00/ 61.76) (43.53/ 62.20) (135.56/ 191.26), Thus the hypothesis of the study is accepted.

The researcher attributes this great improvement in the experimental group's school counselor performance to the effectiveness of the study program, which is full of stimulations, experiences and activities. All these aspects help the counselor interact with the training environment components. The provided experiences, situations, motivations attracted their attention and pushed them to organized research and thinking that developed their occupational performance. The researcher applied several strategies, techniques and activities effectively to bridge the gaps and weak points of school counselors. All this contributed to developing counselor's latent productive energy. The researcher also devised some scenarios that helped counselors to be exposed to real problems that made them research and think to find solutions to the problems that they encounter. For this purpose, techniques of modeling and role play were applied in addition to other techniques. The researcher created a safe, suitable environment for this and took all the questions of the participants into consideration, as well as helping them to find solutions and alternatives to the problems that they encountered in the training setting.

The researcher here agrees with Othman (1993) that when the development environment of a counselor is planned and organized, it will be an enrichment activity for a counselor. The more these surroundings are rich, efficient and adequate, the more they enrich a counselor in all aspects. A program rich in stimulations and activities in inspiration and response achieves great improvement in occupational performance of counselors and this is what the researcher achieved through the program's activities and techniques.

Besides, the researcher developed a program that progressed from general to specific; from familiar problems to unfamiliar problems that a counselor might encounter, a feature that helped counselors to go deep in thinking and application. The researcher also applied a new step in every session then reinforced the previous one. As a result the counselors reached an advanced level of proficiency and performance improvement which is clear from the study statistical analysis. The study results are consistent with previous studies such as Brigman (2012), Al-Sharifain (2011), Al-Qaraan (2011, 2012), Mullis (2010), Abu-Yusuf (2008) and Al-Maarouf and Al-Hadethi (2003).

The results of the second hypothesis:

The second hypothesis proposed that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of both the experimental and control group counselors on the occupational performance scale, in

favor of the experimental group. To validate the second hypothesis, Independent Sample T value and significance level between experimental and control group were measured after administration of the program, using the school counselor's occupational performance scale.

Table (10)

Arithmetic means, Standard deviation, Independent Sample T value and the level of statistically significant differences between participants of the experimental group and control group after administration of the program (N=30 for each group)

Dimensions	Implementing	Mean	Std. Dev	T	Sig.
Occupational field	Experimental group	67.30	4.37	25.327	0.001
	Control Group	44.00	7.08		
Social field	Experimental group	61.76	7.60	12.764	0.001
	Control Group	43.26	8.59		
Academic field	Experimental group	62.20	6.21	19.322	0.001
	Control Group	40.80	5.95		
Total degree	Experimental group	191.26	16.07	29.916	0.001
	Control Group	128.06	18.93		

Table (10) indicates that T values are statistically significant at the 0.001 level, so there are statistically significant differences at the 0.001 level of significance between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group on all dimensions of the scale. The arithmetic means of the experimental group were higher than those of the control group as follows:

(67.3/44.00) (61.76/43.26) (62.20 / 40.80) (191.26 / 128.60), Thus the hypothesis of the study is accepted. The study results are consistent with previous studies such as Brigman (2012), Al-Qaraan (2011, 2012) and Al-Maarouf and Al-Hadethi (2003).

The researcher believes that, since, control group students did not attend the training program, their performance remained traditional. They did not perform the same activities that the experimental group counselors performed. The control group's attention was restricted to academic aspects; they did not employ obtained information to improve and develop their occupational performance. Traditional classes focus on simple solutions to problems and do not to develop the ability to find innovative solutions. Moreover, the control group counselors confined themselves to academic study of aspects that they studied in the Guidance and Counseling Diploma for examination, not for developing personal abilities and mastery, so they could not employ their various abilities and potential in improving their occupational performance. The control group studied only the traditional study curriculum, which does not encourage independence and free thinking. It also does not contain stimulations and activities that bridge gaps, defects and weaknesses of interactive field knowledge, compared to the training provided for the experimental group counselors. Added to this, the control group participants were confined in a constrained study environment full of intensive chronological courses, examinations and evaluation, all of which impeded their occupational performance development. On the other hand, the experimental group counselors attended a training program that provided them with practical activities inside the training setting, which was full of various organized meaningful stimulations including theoretical and applied aspects. Hence, experimental group counselors were exposed to different problems became aware of weaknesses, gaps, and defects in their previous performance, and found solutions and alternatives developing their performance. They also try to find solutions bridge the gaps and test them. Exposure of the experimental group counselors to various stimulations, new strategies and techniques of application provided them with several ideas, alternatives and the ability to recall received information and experiences, as these stimulations were related to various situations that a school counselor encounters in the school environment.

Moreover, the various activities that the participants of the experimental group performed helped them think differently, using a variety of approaches and shift from one counseling situation to another as they encountered several problems during training. All this led to a great development in the experimental group's performance compared to the control group.

The results of the third hypothesis

The third hypothesis was that there are no statistically significant differences between- the mean scores of the experimental and control group counselors on the school counselor performance scale post-test based on gender or experience. To verify the third hypothesis, Factorial Design Anova was conducted to find statistically significant differences.

Table (11)

Arithmetic means and Standard deviations of the experimental and control group participants on the school counselor performance scale post-test, based on gender and experience (N=30 per-group)

Experience	Gender	Group	Mean	Std. Dev	Frequency
1-5	Males	Control	111.850	1.930	4
		Experimental	184.250	1.436	4
		Total	148.050	40.679	8
	Females	Control	109.666	1.914	4
		Experimental	178.750	7.274	4
		Total	144.208	36.812	8
	Total	Control	110.758	1.225	8
		Experimental	181.500	8.831	8
		Total	146.129	37.494	16
5-10	Males	Control	103.796	1.965	4
		Experimental	189.250	1.893	4
		Total	146.523	42.544	8
	Females	Control	102.500	2.222	4
		Experimental	183.750	6.898	4
		Total	143.125	41.747	8
	Total	Control	103.148	2.222	8
		Experimental	186.500	5.529	8
		Total	144.824	40.784	16
10-15	Males	Control	150.555	3.559	4
		Experimental	201.500	4.358	4
		Total	155.750	49.047	8
	Females	Control	110.750	6.702	4
		Experimental	177.750	3.403	4
		Total	144.250	36.149	8
	Total	Control	130.652	4.983	8
		Experimental	189.625	13.201	8
		Total	160.138	42.044	16
15-above	Males	Control	133.333	5.033	4
		Experimental	215.666	9.073	4
		Total	174.499	53.170	8
	Females	Control	138.252	3.206	4
		Experimental	213.333	0.577	4
		Total	175.792	50.337	8
	Total	Control	135.792	3.988	8
		Experimental	214.500	5.890	8
		Total	175.146	49.364	16
Total	Males	Control	118.993	3.967	15
		Experimental	196.466	13.553	15
		Total	157.729	44.306	30
	Females	Control	110.688	6.000	15

Experience	Gender	Group	Mean	Std. Dev	Frequency
		Experimental	186.733	14.815	15
		Total	148.710	39.834	30
	Total	Control	114.840	5.981	30
		Experimental	191.600	14.803	30
		Total	153.220	41.842	60

Table (11) indicates that the mean scores of the control group participants were less than the experimental group mean scores post test on the school counselor performance scale. To verify that the differences between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups were statistically significant, Factorial Design Anova was conducted. This design is applied to find the effects of some independent variables and interactions on a single dependent variable. The results were shown in table 12.

Table (12)

The Factorial Design Anova of the school counselors' performance standard based on Gender and experience (N=30)

Source	Sum. Of squares	DF	Mean square	F - test	Sig.
Correct Model	111155.9	15	7410.393	257.672	0.000
Intercept	1376614	1	1376614	47867.241	0.000
Experience	4152.035	3	1384.011	48.124	0.000
Gender	338.661	1	338.661	11.775	0.138
Group	96721.023	1	96721.023	3363.156	0.000
Experience Gender×	281.424	3	93.808	3.400	0.039
× Experience Group	886.038	3	295.346	10.404	0.000
×Gender Group	340.002	1	340.002	11.536	0.001
Experience Gender × Group×	312.323	3	104.107	2.994	0.030
Error	1321.351	44	30.030		
Total	150111.115	60			
Modified Sum	104222.3	59			

Table (12) indicates that there are no statistically differences at the level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups participants on the school counselor performance scale post-test, based on gender. The F value was (11.775) which is not significant at the level of ($0.05 \geq \alpha$). Thus, the hypothesis of the study is accepted for gender variable. This is consistent with the results of research by Brigman (2012), Al-Qaraan (2010), Abu-Yusuf (2008), who found no statistically significant differences based on gender.

This finding is attributed to experimental procedure method and similarity between male and female counselors in terms of specialization, years of experience, university of study and nature of work. Both male and female had the same standards, so their performance level was similar to each other.

However, There are statistically significant differences at the level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$) between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups participants on the school counselor performance scale post-administration of the program based on experience. The F value was (48.124) which is significant at the level of (a=0.000). Thus, the Null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, stating that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group participants on the school counselor performance scale and the control group mean scores post-administration of the program based on experience. To determine the years of experience that were more significant, Scheffe test was used for the post-

comparison. Table 13 shows the results.

Table (13)

Scheffe test to identify the years of experience that are more significant

Experience×	Mean	Std. Dev	Sig.
10 : 5 5−1	1.588	1.785	0.898
15 :10	4.454	1.999	0.209
15-above	22.056	2.047	0.000
5−1 10−5	1.588	1.785	0.898
15 :10	2.995	1.995	0.656
15-above	21.558	2.047	0.000
15 −101-5	4.454	1.999	0.209
5-10	2.995	1.995	0.656
15-above	19.880	2.047	0.000
15-above5−1	22.056	2.047	0.000
10 :5	21.558	2.047	0.000
15 :10	19.880	2.047	0.000

Table (13) indicates that the differences in experience variable are in the group with 15 years of experience. This result consistent with the results of the study of SHaheen, (2010), and the study of Abu-Yusuf (2008), meanwhile, it does not agree with the study of Al-Qaraan (2010).

This result is attributed to the following reason. Participants of the study sample, studying in the Guidance and Counseling Diploma, had a bachelor in Education, Islamic studies, and Arts, but they did not perform counseling career before. That is why there was a significant difference of experience between study participants especially those having more than 15 years of experience.

Recommendations of the Study

According to the findings of the present study, the researcher proposes the following recommendations:

1. Determining the possibility of evaluating the training program of the present study and whether it could be applied on a high number of school counselors in different areas and organizations concerned with developing counselors' occupational performance standard.
2. Preparing continuous specialized training courses to develop school counselors' occupational performance and notifying them of the recent developments in their field.
3. Involving school counselors in domestic, Arab, and international counseling conferences.
4. Establishing a Counseling library in all educational institutions, in which modern counseling references will be available, to help counselors be aware of recent developments in the counseling field.

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فعالية برنامج تدريبي لتحسين الأداء المهني لدى طلاب وطالبات دبلوم الإرشاد الطلابي بجامعة القصيم

دخيل بن محمد البهدل*

ملخص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى بحث فاعلية برنامج تدريبي لتحسين الأداء المهني لدى المرشد الطلابي، وتم تطبيق البرنامج على عينة نهائية قوامها 60 طالباً وطالبة من الطلاب الملتحقين بدبلوم التوجيه والإرشاد بجامعة القصيم، كما تم تقسيمها إلى مجموعتين تجريبية وضابطة، وتمثلت أدوات الدراسة في مقياس الأداء المهني لدى المرشد الطلابي (إعداد الباحث)، وبعد تطبيق برنامج تدريبي لتحسين الأداء المهني لدى المرشد الطلابي (إعداد الباحث)، وتوصلت نتائج الدراسة إلى وجود فروق دالة إحصائيا تشير إلى فاعلية البرنامج في تحسين الأداء المهني لدى المرشد الطلابي في المجموعة التجريبية مقارنة بالمجموعة الضابطة، كما توصلت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فروق دالة في أداء المرشد الطلابي تعزى لمتغير الجنس، وتوصلت أيضاً إلى وجود تأثير دال لمتغير الخبرة على أفراد عينة الدراسة ممن تجاوزت خبرتهم 15 عاماً.

الكلمات الدالة: الأداء المهني، المرشد الطلابي، برنامج تدريبي.

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