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Professional Research Thesis

Titled

**The Role Of Family Counseling In Promoting Understanding
Among Family Members**

Researcher

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Thanks, and gifts

To the one who removed all obstacles from our path and painted for us a future filled with faith, trust, and hope, until giving knelt before her, my dear mother.

To the one who prioritized us over herself and generously gave us her love, her very essence, and her life, with the unwavering belief that we deserve the best, and that tomorrow is always more beautiful—my father, may he rest in peace, whose absence still allows us to see hope through his eyes.

To the jasmine flower overflowing with love and childhood, radiating energy and intelligence, and exuding fragrance and beauty—my little sister and daughter, Ursula.

To my friends, whose images, voices, laughter, and tears persist in my memory, reminding me of the beautiful moments and the days of our lives spent together in my homeland, which bleeds and suffers without mercy.

To the land of Kinanah, the protected one, which granted me shelter, safety, love, and a second chance at a new life after the migration and diaspora of Egypt, the mother of the world, which loves all who love her.

And heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all those who supported me in my research journey, illuminating the darkness with optimism and assistance, generously providing me with information and facilitation, perhaps without even realizing it, and never asking for anything in return.

The researcher

SUMMARY

The family is one of the most sensitive social structures in human society, both affected by and influencing numerous organizations and institutions related to the basic needs of community members. It serves as a focal point for various social relationships and processes, with socialization being one of the most prominent.

Currently, the situation of families is influenced by many global, regional, and local conditions, casting shadows over all family members. One of the most noticeable recent trends is the estrangement and distance between family members, which has created a significant gap and a disparity in ideas and concepts. This, in turn, has hindered communication and understanding within the family, as each member faces multiple psychological, practical, social, economic, and cultural pressures that create a need for guidance. Such pressures can weaken their deeply rooted family values and principles, leading to numerous conflicts that diminish understanding and weaken bonds among family members. This makes the family structure fragile and disjointed. Sometimes, conflicts arise within an individual themselves, increasing tension and anxiety for both themselves and other family members.

Thus, the need for family counseling becomes urgent to enlighten family members about their rights and obligations, assisting them in achieving harmony and balance, and opening channels of communication to enable clear discussions about their differences. It is crucial to identify any dysfunction that may seep into family relationships, which could lead to an

inability to communicate effectively and directly among family members, a fundamental problem many families face.

Each family member is an independent personality with their own identity and unique thoughts, while also being an active member of the family, forming a cohesive social unit striving for personal growth, reinforcing positive family values, and eliminating or weakening negative ones. This can help achieve psychological compatibility and intellectual understanding within a family atmosphere rich in security, safety, and peace, thus building a stronghold that protects family members from surrounding dangers, whether from the local community or the world at large.

Therefore, family counseling is a powerful and effective tool in enhancing understanding and stability within families, improving family life overall, and achieving family welfare and happiness.

The study Problem.

In the past, family members would turn to relatives and friends for advice and guidance in solving their problems and enhancing relationships and understanding among themselves, as they were the only source of consultation regarding family issues and challenges. However, with the evolution and changes in family structure and the diminishing of its functions, family counseling has emerged as a vital necessity for achieving and enhancing understanding and family stability in the face of rapid and ongoing changes and challenges. Family counseling relies on a set of methods, techniques, and skills that help families solve problems and regain stability, as seen by family counselors working in the Afro-Asian Dreams Association, particularly regarding their role in promoting understanding among family members based on sound scientific principles.

Moreover, it is essential to identify the obstacles that family counselors face during the counseling process, as well as the suggestions that could help address these obstacles and improve the counseling process. This is crucial for advancing the fundamental pillars that family counselors rely on to develop their skills, increase their expertise, and enhance their performance in promoting understanding among family members.

In light of the above and our awareness of the depth of the problem, a significant part of the responsibility leads us to formulate the study problem in the following question: What is the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members?

This question branches into the following inquiries:

- *What are the characteristics of the family counselor?*
- *What are the characteristics of the clients?*
- *What obstacles do family counselors face during the counseling process?*

The importance of studying:

The importance of the study is divided into two sections:

Theoretical Importance: *This study is considered exploratory due to the lack of previous studies in the research location. Thus, it may contribute to the existing literature that discusses contemporary family counseling, addressing its significance and the challenges it faces. The study is characterized by enriching suitable theories and utilizing them to guide the research objectives and analyze the results, which may contribute to the development of theories in the field.*

Practical Importance: *This study is expected to yield results that can be relied upon to improve and enhance the role of family counseling in promoting understanding among family members. Additionally, it aims to produce recommendations and suggestions that may be considered by relevant stakeholders.*

Objectives of the study:

The primary objective of the current study is to identify the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members, as perceived by family counselors at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association in Giza Governorate. This objective can be divided into the following specific aims:

- *To identify the characteristics of family counselors working at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association.*
- *To identify the characteristics of the clients.*
- *To understand the obstacles faced by family counselors during the counseling process.*
- *To gather suggestions from family counselors to address the challenges of family counseling.*
- *To develop a proposed framework for improving the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members.*

Study hypotheses and questions.

A. Research Hypotheses:

- 1. There is a close relationship between family counseling and enhancing understanding among family members.*
- 2. There is a correlation between the characteristics of the family counselor and their practice of family counseling.*
- 3. There is a relationship between the characteristics of the clients and the family counseling process.*
- 4. There is a connection between the obstacles faced by the family counselor during the counseling process and the lack of success in the counseling efforts.*

B. Research Questions: *The main question is: What is the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members, as perceived by family counselors at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association in Giza Governorate? From this question, the following inquiries arise:*

- 1. What are the characteristics of the family counselors working at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association in terms of (gender, nationality, age, educational qualifications, where they obtained their qualifications, specialization, years of experience, training, nature of work, professional contract, therapeutic techniques, and methods used in family counseling)?*
- 2. What are the characteristics of the clients in terms of (types of issues, target groups, methods and means of providing counseling, confidentiality, number of cases received per month, and client evaluations)?*

3. *What obstacles do family counselors face during the counseling process?*
4. *What suggestions do family counselors have for addressing obstacles and improving the counseling process?*

Study Approach.

The researcher adopted a descriptive methodology to conduct this study, which relies on studying the reality or phenomenon as it exists. This approach focuses on providing an accurate description through qualitative expression that describes the phenomenon, analyzes it, and interprets it. It expresses the phenomenon qualitatively, highlighting its characteristics, while also providing a quantitative description that illustrates the magnitude or size of the phenomenon and the degrees of its correlation with various phenomena (Dawqan Ubaidat, 2005).

The limits of the study:

***Spatial Boundaries:** The field study was conducted in Giza Governorate, at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association, Al-Faisal, Republic of Egypt.*

***Temporal Boundaries:** The questionnaire was distributed and collected during the month of August 2024.*

Study plan:

The study plan is structured as follows:

- 1. Introduction*
- 2. Problem Statement*
- 3. Importance of the Study*
- 4. Objectives of the Study*
- 5. Hypotheses and Research Questions*
- 6. Research Methodology*
- 7. Boundaries of the Study*
- 8. Previous Studies*
- 9. Theoretical Framework*
- 10. Terms and Concepts of the Study*
- 11. Data Collection and Analysis*
- 12. Discussion of Results*
- 13. Recommendations and Suggestions*
- 14. Conclusion*
- 15. References*
- 16. Table of Contents*

Preliminary Chapter

First Section

Introduction: *This study addresses a theoretical framework related to the family and family counseling in terms of its concept, importance, objectives, types, stages, services, the role of the counselor, counseling interviews, family understanding, and its theories.*

- 1. The Family:*** *The family is a universal phenomenon in all human societies; there is no family without a community, and no community without a family. It is the cornerstone, the crucible that surrounds the individual from birth, providing them with the values and principles that help them adapt to their surrounding society.*

The family is more than just a means of reproduction and raising children; it is a group whose function is to provide its members with many basic satisfactions. It plays a significant role in the emotional development of the individual, offering a sense of economic security. These characteristics enable the family to fulfill its roles as outlined by society (Halilo, October 9, 2013).

The family is the primary social unit aimed at preserving the human species, governed by the collective rationality and the rules established by different societies. The family system is considered the nucleus of society (Badawi, 1993).

The family is defined as the unit of socialization, and from this perspective, it has been the subject of study and analysis by many scholars. It is an intimate group of individuals connected by kinship or descent, in addition

to shared living arrangements. It is the main educational institution responsible for raising children properly, and it is one of the social units that has resisted the changes and developments over time (Al-Qayyim, 2022).

One of the things we often do not want to confront, even within ourselves, is the reality of the families we grew up in. This is, of course, a form of self-protection from pain. To live in these families, we must convince ourselves that the home we inhabit is the best in existence and that our family is the best. This satisfies a basic human instinct—the need for belonging. Perhaps this is essential during childhood for us to survive, or rather, to coexist. However, to change ourselves and our behavioral patterns and relationships after we move beyond childhood and adolescence, we must take a more realistic and objective look at the families we grew up in.

It is crucial to understand the relationships between our current ways of thinking and relating and what we learned in our childhood, so that we can change any negative and harmful lessons for ourselves and those around us.

The family of origin is the first place where we learned about relationships; it is practically our first experience of relationships in life. The family should ideally be the environment where we learn to speak and communicate, how to receive and express emotions, and how to care for ourselves and receive care from others. The family of origin is where we are supposed to have learned to develop an independent personality while also belonging to a family and a community. We learn how to separate and connect, how to perceive others in our minds, and how to enter the consciousness of others. Therefore, our accurate perception of the families

we grew up in should provide us with insight into how we learned to form relationships (Wasef, 2009).

2. Family Counseling: *Family counseling refers to a broad term encompassing various methods and approaches used when working with families facing organic, psychological, and social difficulties. It consists of a set of psychological and social services aimed at improving relationships among family members and providing psychological and social support to the family. This is achieved by guiding the family in dealing with the problems and challenges they face, and family counseling is considered a specialized and cognitive field.*

Family counseling is defined as "the process of helping family members (parents, children, and relatives), either individually or collectively, to understand family life and their responsibilities to achieve stability, adjustment, and understanding among family members, and to resolve family problems."

It involves assisting all family members, whether individuals or groups, in understanding the requirements of family life, including their mutual rights and obligations. The concept of family in counseling includes all relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts.

It is also described as "an attempt to modify relationships within the family system, considering that family problems result from incorrect family interactions rather than being specific to an individual within the family."

Family counseling is a process in which family members are assisted in understanding family life and learning problem-solving skills to achieve stability, adjustment, and family happiness. Notably, family counseling

intersects with multiple disciplines, as it is of interest to professionals in social work, counseling, psychiatry, psychology, and mental health. This interdisciplinary focus has contributed to the rapid development of family counseling as a form of guidance and support.

Family counseling is a unique relationship characterized by confidentiality and interaction (mental and emotional communication) between an individual or group facing a specific problem and a skilled helper who works to create conditions that facilitate problem-solving and behavior change in accordance with the goals and values of the client (Abu Abadah & Niazi, 2000).

3. Objectives of Family Counseling:

- 1. To achieve harmony and integration in relationships among family members, thereby enabling effective communication and empowering them to discuss and solve their problems while expressing their emotions and feelings towards one another freely and openly. This also involves identifying any dysfunctions that hinder relationships within the family.*
- 2. To enhance understanding of family principles and values among each family member.*
- 3. To increase and strengthen personal growth among individuals, enhancing their effectiveness in fulfilling social responsibilities and achieving psychological adjustment in a family environment filled with reassurance.*
- 4. To develop good relationships with others both within and outside the family.*

5. *To assist family members in finding new behaviors that they perceive as suitable for resolving their issues (Abu As'ad, 2008).*

4/Importance of Family Counseling: *In light of the ongoing social changes that society is experiencing, families can no longer independently confront the effects and consequences of these changes. This has led to numerous problems that hinder many family members' abilities to fulfill their responsibilities, thereby disrupting the peaceful flow of family life. This context highlights the importance of family counseling in all its fields and the necessity for it (Al-Mudaiq, 2006).*

Family counseling is essential for improving family relationships and providing psychological and social support to the family. There are several reasons that make family counseling important, including:

1. ***Improving Family Quality of Life:*** *Family counseling helps enhance the quality of family life, providing psychological and social support and fostering positive relationships among family members.*
2. ***Improving Family Relationships:*** *Family counseling offers psychological and social support, aiding in the enhancement of positive relationships among family members and promoting their communication and interaction skills.*
3. ***Improving the Mental Health of Family Members:*** *It enhances overall happiness and life satisfaction and can help reduce stress and tension in family life.*
4. ***Resolving Family Problems:*** *Family counseling assists in resolving various family issues, such as marital problems, challenges related to child-rearing, and family conflicts arising from financial and*

economic disagreements. This is where the significance of family counseling becomes particularly evident, as counselors play a crucial role in addressing these problems, leading to the proliferation of family counseling centers.

- 5. Enhancing Balance Between Family Life and Individual Obligations:** *Family counseling aids in achieving a balance between family life and the individual commitments of its members, which can enhance the independence and reliance of family members.*

Several problems have underscored the importance of family counseling in the present era, including:

- **Incorrect Socialization Methods:** *There is a variety of socialization methods within families and society that affect children, ranging from healthy practices based on equality, moderation, positivity, encouragement, perseverance, selflessness, and innovation to unhealthy methods characterized by authoritarianism, overprotection, neglect, and pampering. While healthy socialization methods produce balanced, compatible, and productive individuals, unhealthy practices lead to unbalanced personalities that may lean towards illness and delinquency. Hence, family counseling is vital in enlightening families about unhealthy methods (Al-Arjani, 2011).*
- **Family Pressures:** *Most families recently face numerous consequences that represent sources of stress, including:*
 - **Psychological Barriers:** *The presence of psychological or mental illnesses that disrupt personal development.*
 - **Social Barriers:** *Customs and traditions, along with social issues, that hinder or complicate the fulfillment of individual needs.*

- ***Economic Barriers:*** *Poverty and lack of financial resources can prevent many from achieving their life goals, leading to feelings of frustration and necessitating counseling intervention.*
- ***Unemployment:*** *In any society, unemployment represents a ticking time bomb if not addressed and studied to mitigate its economic, psychological, and social impacts.*
- ***Family Disintegration:*** *Several reasons contribute to family disintegration, including marital conflicts and the neglect of family roles by one or both partners (Khidr, 2008).*

Conclusion.

At the conclusion of this study, after presenting the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members as perceived by family counselors working at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association in Giza, Egypt, we can assert that scientific research forms the fundamental basis for uncovering or affirming scientific truths, as well as for deepening and improving them. This is particularly important for studies and the humanities to advance and develop individuals, and consequently, families and society. It provides a deeper understanding of the world, enabling individuals to face the rapid challenges and innovations around them. Human beings influence and are influenced; therefore, we must cling to and commit to knowledge and learning, keeping our goals in sight to achieve scientific progress and development through continuous research and education, regardless of the obstacles and challenges we may encounter.

This brings us to the problem addressed by the current study: What is the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members? Conducting this study was very challenging, but we tried as much as possible to inspire ourselves with the motivation to explore the reality of the role of family counseling in fostering family understanding as perceived by the counselors at the Afro-Asian Dreams Association. The goal was to maintain family unity and cohesion by promoting communication, understanding, and harmony among members so they can collectively confront any threats that may jeopardize their family structure.

After an exhaustive period of research, analysis, and interpretation, we found that family counseling plays a significant, effective, and decisive role

in enhancing family understanding. This finding has further motivated us to develop important recommendations and proposals based on the study, which can help address the challenges faced in the counseling process. Furthermore, these recommendations could enhance and improve the role of family counseling in fostering understanding within the Afro-Asian Dreams Association, and could subsequently be generalized.

We have thus concluded that scientific research contributes to a better, deeper, and more comprehensive understanding of the role of family counseling. We do not claim to be the first or the last to explore this topic; many others can address it with more comprehensive hypotheses and questions, which may provide them with an advantage over us. We would be pleased with this, as we all work together to reduce negativity and overcome obstacles that stand in the way of family counseling, in general, and the challenges faced by counselors during the counseling process, in particular. These challenges can hinder the achievement of the overall goals of family counseling.

Finally, if there are shortcomings in any aspect of the presentation made through this study, we hope for your understanding, as we are still following in the footsteps of esteemed researchers and scholars. May blessings and peace be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad bin Abdullah, the truthful and trustworthy, from the first to the last, as many as those who remember him until the Day of Judgment.

Results.

Introduction:

This study focused on the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members from the perspective of family counselors practicing in the Afro-Asian Dreams Association. The study is divided into three main sections: the first section includes 13 paragraphs, the second section consists of 5 paragraphs, and the third section contains 2 paragraphs. We collected data from the sample members and analyzed their responses, which resulted in the following findings:

First Section:

Characteristics of Family Counselors: *(gender, nationality, age, educational qualification, source of qualification, specialization, years of experience, training, nature of work, number of cases handled, evaluation of clients, techniques used in family counseling to enhance understanding among family members).*

- 1. Paragraph (1) Sample Characteristics by Gender:** *Table (1) shows that the percentage of males is higher than that of females. This result was very surprising to the researcher, as it is commonly believed that the profession of family counseling is more suitable for women. This indicates that the type of need determines the demand, as the majority of clients are migrants and refugees. Often, clients suffer from psychological disorders, which may expose some female counselors to safety risks. At the same time, the association does not provide complete safety and protection, making the likelihood of employing male family counselors more probable. Additionally,*

male counselors encourage male family members, both adults and adolescents, to seek counseling without hesitation. However, this does not apply to everyone.

2. **Paragraph (2) Sample Characteristics by Nationality:** *Table (2) shows that the highest percentage of counselors is Sudanese. This is primarily because the administrators of the association are Sudanese, as are most of the clients, if not all. This has two implications: the positive aspect is that clients feel more assured and confident, especially given their poor psychological state, knowing that the family counselor shares the same nationality and thus can empathize and understand them better. However, this may also limit the counselor's ability to acquire new skills and experiences beyond their nationality.*
3. **Paragraph (3) Age Group:** *In Table (3), the age group of 35 to less than 40 years is predominant. Counselors in this age range possess experience, skills, and good communication with clients. While this is not a fixed rule, most counselors in this group tend to be competent.*
4. **Paragraph (4) Educational Qualification:** *Table (4) indicates that those with a bachelor's degree represent the highest percentage of family counselors in the association. Although this result is somewhat concerning, as successful family counseling requires highly qualified counselors with expertise and academic qualifications, the profession of family counseling is sensitive and precise, necessitating that counselors are well-versed in it.*
5. **Paragraph (5) Source of Qualification:** *Table (5) shows that Sudanese universities are in the lead. This is a predictable result, as most family counselors in the association are Sudanese, and thus the*

majority graduated from Sudanese universities, with only a few exceptions.

Paragraph (6) Specialization: Sociology ranked first in Table (6), which aligns with role theory that emphasizes the specific behavior patterns influenced by several factors, primarily the responsibilities and duties defined by the family for the individual in the role, and the significance given to that role. It is expected that the social worker working in the association will possess substantial experience and high training.

Paragraph (7) Years of Experience: The results in Table (7) were somewhat surprising, aligning with systems theory that indicates the success factors for family counselors are linked to their social, economic, and educational status. Although the years of experience are fewer, this does not diminish the importance of the practicing social worker after they have received scientific and professional preparation and intensive training. Additionally, they have the ability to communicate effectively with clients, directly or indirectly, enhancing the counseling process. This also serves as a positive indicator of the family counseling field being infused with new and contemporary approaches to local and global changes affecting family cohesion and unity.

Paragraph (8) Training on Counseling Skills: Table (8) supports role theory by highlighting the behavior patterns related to the responsibilities and duties assigned to individuals in these roles, as well as the importance placed on these roles. The findings also align with systems theory, which shows that the success of the family counselor and their experience level enable them to rely heavily on training-related factors that closely determine their success as family counselors. This result is consistent with the study by Al-Ashawi (2018), which identified the training needs of family counselors.

Paragraph (9) Nature of the Family Counselor's Work: The highest percentage in Table (9) was among cooperative family counselors, who somewhat negatively affect the efficiency of the counseling process due to their lack of commitment to necessary working hours, long intervals between counseling sessions, and clients seeing multiple counselors. This can discourage clients and weaken their engagement with the counseling process, as they may feel it does not achieve the desired goals.

Paragraph (10) Professional Contractors: The highest percentage in Table (10) was among contracted family counselors, at (62%). This result is consistent with the study by Al-Jabib (2019), highlighting the importance of role theory, which considers the practitioner in family counseling as

an individual occupying a specific social position with rights and obligations governing their interactions with others occupying different social roles, along with their responsibilities towards clients' rights.

Paragraph (11) Nature of the Family Counselor's Role. In Table (11), diagnosis and problem assessment are at the forefront, followed by formulating a helping plan, and then involving the client in determining the intervention program. These are among the most critical roles that a family counselor can undertake, which are essential for the success of the counseling process, even if some roles are not fully completed.

Paragraph (12) Therapeutic Approaches. In Table (12), we observe a variety of therapeutic approaches, with cognitive-behavioral therapy leading the way. However, we appreciate the diversity of therapeutic methods to meet the different needs of clients. This variety encourages family counselors to be trained in all therapeutic approaches and to develop a deep understanding of their strategies and techniques. Consequently, family counselors can more easily and accurately identify the appropriate treatment for each client, thereby indirectly reducing the number of therapy sessions needed.

Secondly: Axis Two:

What are the characteristics of clients: (Type of issues, target groups, methods and means of counseling, privacy, rights and responsibilities).

- 1. Paragraphs (1) and (2) Type of Issues / Target Groups:*** In Tables (13) and (14), it is evident that families rank first regarding family issues and target groups in the counseling process. The family is prioritized in both paragraphs (1) and (2) due to its significance and the importance of the well-being of its members. This highlights the crucial role of family counseling, especially in light of the contemporary threats surrounding family members of all age groups. This situation makes the role of the family counselor an urgent need to enhance understanding among family members to ensure their cohesion and unity in facing challenges and leading a better, happier life.
- 2. Paragraph (3) Method of Providing Counseling:*** From Table (15), it is clear that the majority of clients prefer face-to-face consultations, followed by requests for phone consultations. Despite being in second place, the percentage of those preferring phone consultations cannot be overlooked, as it indicates a significant number of clients may not feel comfortable attending in person due to cultural beliefs that cause embarrassment when discussing sensitive issues. Additionally, differences in gender between the counselor and the client may lead women to prefer female counselors and vice versa. Nevertheless, clients are aware of the importance of family counseling and its role in their recovery and family stability.

3. **Paragraph (4) Privacy:** *The results in Table (16) show that privacy is a concern for both the family counselor and the client, as it is the foundation of trust between them. Privacy is a crucial component of the client's acceptance of the counseling process and significantly contributes to the success of therapy sessions, as it falls within the regulations encompassing clients' rights and responsibilities.*
4. **Paragraph (5) Monthly Counseling Sessions:** *Table (17) indicates that the monthly attendance for counseling sessions is very low, barely achieving the objectives of the counseling association. This is attributed to the nature of family counselors working as volunteers, which requires them to adhere to limited working hours, in addition to a lack of awareness regarding the importance of family counseling. Secondary factors include the distance of the association from some clients' homes and financial constraints.*
5. **Paragraph (6) Discussion of Client Evaluations:** *From Table (18), it is evident that discussing client evaluations ranked first, which is a positive indicator as it supports and trains less experienced counselors, allowing them to gain skills from more seasoned counselors. This also affirms the accuracy of the evaluations or their correction. Thus, involving clients in evaluating their counselors is a positive step towards enhancing the counseling process.*

Thirdly: Axis Three.

What are the obstacles faced by the family counselor during the counseling process: the challenges faced by the counselor during the counseling process, and what are the suggestions to overcome them and improve family counseling?

Paragraphs (1) and (2) Obstacles faced by the family counselor during the counseling process / Suggestions to overcome them and improve the counseling process: From Table (19), it is evident that there is a connection between cultural obstacles (such as considerations of privacy, awareness of the importance of family counseling, social stigma, and the nature of the family counselor's role) and the limited experience of family counselors. This limited experience is considered one of the reasons why these counselors struggle to convince clients of their role as family counselors and the importance of family counseling itself, especially since the beliefs held by clients make persuasion a very difficult task unless the family counselor is skilled and has extensive experience.

In Table (20), the results align with the systems theory, which illustrates that the success of the family counselor and their effectiveness significantly depends on factors related to training, skills, and capabilities, closely determining the level of success. This finding also agrees with the

study by Al-Ashyawi (2018), which identified the training needs of family counselors.

Based on the above, it is clear that family counseling is an equation involving two variables: the client and the family counselor, who is the backbone and cornerstone of the counseling process. On the other hand, interaction among family members is the foundation for family stability and well-being. Thus, whenever we discuss the importance of family counseling from any angle, we are implicitly addressing the understanding among family members as a fundamental issue. Without this family understanding, no family counseling—whether individual or collective—can succeed. From this perspective, we can appreciate and emphasize the importance of the role of family counseling in enhancing understanding among family members.

This study has shown that despite the challenges faced by family counselors, including cultural obstacles and limited societal awareness, they have managed to fulfill their counseling roles, overcoming these challenges. An increasing segment of society recognizes that family counseling is a powerful tool for strengthening and improving family relationships. However, to achieve this, efforts must be made to enhance understanding among family members, as such understanding effectively

contributes to improving communication, resolving conflicts, facing life challenges, and achieving internal peace and family balance. This, in turn, fosters family cohesion, unity, stability, and the well-being of its members.

Recommendations.

Based on the results obtained, and to ensure that family counseling effectively enhances understanding among family members, the study recommends the following:

- 1. **Preparation of Qualified Family Counselors:** It is essential to train family counselors academically and professionally, creating specialized fields within family counseling that cater to the unique needs of each family member based on age, gender, personality traits, and the nature of the issues (such as family therapy, couples counseling, adolescent support, child guidance, and addiction counseling). This will elevate the skills of family counselors and improve the counseling process, thereby playing a significant role in strengthening family understanding and cohesion.*
- 2. **Workshops and Training Courses:** Organize workshops and training programs for practicing family counselors that address the specific types and nature of problems faced by family members. These programs should keep pace with changes across various aspects of life that negatively affect individuals, whether economically, culturally, socially, or ideologically.*
- 3. **Preventive, Therapeutic, and Developmental Programs:** Family counselors should develop preventive, therapeutic, and developmental programs for all family members. There should be efforts to raise awareness about the significance of family counseling and the issues it addresses through community participation with educational, health, social, and reform institutions, as well as associations, clubs, centers, and neighborhoods. Media campaigns and global events such as*

International Women's Day, Children's Day, and national holidays should also be utilized.

4. ***Combatting Social Stigma:*** *There must be diligent efforts to remove the social stigma associated with counseling, correcting societal beliefs that view family counseling as a luxury or mere advice. It should be emphasized that family counseling is essential for all family members, regardless of age, and is a structured therapeutic process aimed at resolving family issues and enhancing understanding for a better life.*
5. ***Enforcement of Laws:*** *It is crucial to activate laws that penalize individuals who practice family counseling without appropriate qualifications, training, and experience. This is vital to protect both clients and counselors since the counseling process can either strengthen family unity and well-being when conducted properly, or, if mishandled, can lead to catastrophic outcomes that destabilize families.*
6. ***Monitoring Licensing:*** *There should be strict oversight regarding the issuance of licenses for practicing family counseling, ensuring that only centers meeting the standards outlined in the regulatory framework for non-governmental family counseling centers are licensed. This focus should prioritize both the center's management and the practitioners.*
7. ***Providing Statistics:*** *Necessary statistics should be made available to researchers, students, and specialists through lists compiled by relevant authorities, whether governmental or private.*
8. ***Collaboration with Researchers:*** *There should be a proactive approach to engage with researchers in this field, supplying them*

with essential information that supports scientific research and respects their efforts to enhance family well-being.

9. Warm Engagement with Clients: *Counselors should greet clients with warmth and optimism, fostering trust and hope from the moment they meet. This initial connection is crucial for establishing rapport.*

10. Professional Relationship from the Start: *Establish a professional relationship with the client from the very first moment of contact.*

11. Appropriate Titles and Respect: *Counselors should be mindful of how they introduce themselves and interact with clients, preferably using respectful titles (e.g., "Mr./Ms." or "Doctor").*

12. Avoid Implying Dependency on External Help: *Counselors should refrain from suggesting or implying that clients should seek help from their surrounding environment.*

These recommendations aim to enhance the effectiveness of family counseling and promote a culture of understanding and support within families.

The reviewer:

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