Training Needs of Clinical Psychologists in Screening and Follow-up Units for Health

Zineb Marouf[1], Malika Ben Bordi[2]

Abstract

This research paper aims to highlight the training needs of clinical psychological specialists working in screening and follow-up units, considering these units as an embodiment of institutional policy within educational settings. The study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, which goes beyond merely collecting information and describing the reality; it focuses on analyzing data and revealing the relationships between its dimensions to interpret them and reach conclusions that contribute to the development of the clinical psychological specialist's work. Additionally, it seeks to provide support during clinical practice within the screening and follow-up units related to school health, particularly in working with individual or group student cases in the school environment. This is achieved by identifying the training needs necessary for effectively performing their duties within these units.

Keywords: *Training Needs, Clinical Psychological Specialist, Screening and Follow-Up Units for School Health.*

Introduction

Training is one of the most important strategies that enable individuals to develop, advance, and achieve their goals by enhancing the capabilities and skills they require. Training can bring significant benefits to individuals, making them more effective in performing their duties. Therefore, attention to training has become an urgent necessity for any individual or institution seeking development and quality performance. This has made training a priority for both individuals and institutions to increase effectiveness. One of the main reasons for the focus on training lies in the needs of both individuals and institutions to keep pace with rapidly changing modern technologies, which are required according to the challenges and demands of society. Given the continuous rapid changes across all aspects of society—technological, social, psychological, medical, and others—it is crucial to consider the training needs of individuals in order to keep up with current challenges.

Problem Statement

The ultimate goal of psychology is to assist individuals in resolving their psychological, social, professional, and medical issues, with each specialty within psychology focusing on a specific domain. Clinical psychology emerged as a field dedicated to understanding psychological disorders, treating them, and helping individuals achieve general adaptation and enhance psychological well-being. To achieve this noble goal, psychology has made significant advances over time, shaping the scientific frameworks and therapeutic approaches that clinical psychologists require in their practice. The success of the clinical psychologist and the therapeutic process depends on their ability to help patients adapt to, accept, and integrate their conditions while actively participating in appropriate treatment, thereby overcoming the challenges they face.

The pioneer of clinical practice is often credited to Witmer, a clinical psychologist who opened the first psychological clinic at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896. Clinical practice further evolved, especially after World War II, due to the large number of individuals suffering from psychological disorders and neurotrauma. At that time, specialists worked to address these patients' problems, leading to an increased demand for clinical psychology as a discipline. Consequently, models of clinical practice were established,

[1] Laboratory of Studies and Research in Rural Development, University, Mohamed El Bachir El ibrahimi, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Algeria, Email: zineb.marouf@univ-bba.dz

[2] Laboratory: Studies and Research in Rural Development, University, Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi University, Bordj Bou Arreridj Algeria

and specialized hospitals and clinics for psychological treatment were opened across various parts of the world (Fawzi & Hanan, 2007, p. 90).

The development of clinical psychology has extended beyond clinical practice to include training and educational programs. According to Duflot (1976), the clinical psychologist relies not only on theoretical knowledge but also on self-awareness in their psychological practice. As the subject of the clinical relationship, the psychologist must recognize this dynamic and continually develop their skills and competencies (Duflot, 1976, p. 314).

Psychology has increasingly attracted a large number of students worldwide. A study by Wittchen and Fichter indicated that there is a considerable number of clinical psychologists, which has made clinical practice and therapeutic services more accessible. However, the issue is not limited to the number of practicing clinical psychologists but extends to the quality of their training and the degree to which it aligns with the realities of psychological and medical care (Wittchen & Fichter, 1980, pp. 16–25).

Regarding the suitability of clinical training to the Algerian cultural context, Paul Desfrages (1982) conducted a study on clinical psychology students at the University of Constantine. The study revealed that most graduates from the clinical psychology department do not feel prepared to work directly in their field. Many reported feelings of inefficacy, expressing sentiments such as "We do not know what to do" and "We do not know anything," alongside considerable disappointment compared to their expectations (Desfrages, 1982, p. 23).

A study by Debraso (2010), conducted on a sample of 36 clinical psychologists from the city of Biskra, identified the main sources of psychological stress for clinical psychologists. These include difficulties in diagnosis (83.33%), challenges in test administration (77.77%), and obstacles in treatment (61.11%). Personal difficulties were primarily related to training, with inadequate university education accounting for 83.33%, lack of training at 69.44%, and insufficient field experience at 41.44% (Debraso, 2010).

A study by Al-Saghir et al. (2010) titled "The Reality of Clinical Psychological Practice in Algeria," conducted across six provinces in eastern Algeria with a sample of 35 clinical psychologists, revealed that the daily practice of clinical psychologists reflects inefficiency and ambiguity regarding their role, both from their own perspective and that of others. These findings are attributed to a gap between theoretical and practical training, as well as a lack of clarity in understanding the role of the clinical psychologist and insufficient societal awareness of their function and importance.

The study also emphasizes the critical importance of training and professional development for clinical psychologists, noting that training enables them to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Training is described as an ongoing and planned process aimed at equipping clinical psychologists with the desired skills and techniques.

Among the reasons that make training indispensable for clinical psychologists is the rapid change experienced by societies—socially, psychologically, and technologically—which generates new situations and challenges that require continuously updated knowledge, skills, expertise, and advanced therapeutic methods. This underscores the vital role of training, as the practice of psychological services demands a continuous and systematic regimen of education and training; without it, clinical practice becomes weak and ineffective (Al-Saghir et al., 2010, p. 28).

The importance of training lies in developing positive attitudes among clinical practitioners to face the difficulties encountered in their workplaces. They must be prepared on sound scientific foundations according to a well-defined plan (P. Desfrages, 1982, p. 24).

The concept of training is closely linked to training needs, as the primary goal of training is to fulfill the needs of the clinical psychologist or trainee. It can be said that successful and effective training cannot occur without identifying and assessing the training needs of the clinical psychologist, which means the set of changes and developments required to achieve a balance between the psychologist's views, their role,

and therapeutic objectives. Any training activity is meaningless unless there is a genuine need for it (Abdel Hamid, 2016, p. 90).

Moreover, health within the school environment has been a key educational and health concern since the 1980s. The Ministry of Education, in coordination with the Ministry of Health and several other ministries such as the Ministry of Interior and Solidarity, focused on making school health a primary concern requiring attention from educators and all stakeholders involved in the school. On November 21, 1983, the first ministerial decree was published, emphasizing the necessity of highlighting the school environment where the student grows and focusing on their health through prevention, hygiene, and maintenance. This includes fostering good habits and conducting daily operations related to child health monitoring, such as cleaning recreational areas, playgrounds, and various facilities like restrooms, toilets, lighting, and heating (Ben Salem, 2000, p. 285).

In a study by Didier and Jeanine (2010) on the level of school healthcare and modern methods used to evaluate school health programs through a survey assessing students' and teachers' perceptions and principals' understanding of school health concepts, the study sample consisted of 20 teachers, 200 students, and 100 principals. Data were collected using a questionnaire. The study revealed a lack of awareness among students, teachers, and principals regarding the concepts of school health, and that the implemented school health programs were ineffective. Furthermore, the health programs applied in these schools were outdated and did not address current behavioral problems that hinder the intellectual and psychological development of secondary school students (Al-Rashidi, 2011, pp. 11–41).

The training needs of clinical psychologists appear to be the most critical for their professional practice, as the absence of university-level training in various psychological techniques and treatments, alongside insufficient familiarity with legal texts—particularly recent ones—places clinical psychologists in a difficult position when facing students' problems within the school environment. More specifically, this applies to the units responsible for school health screening and follow-up, where an adequate psychological service is expected to align with the students' disorders that may impede their growth and academic progress.

Hence, the following questions can be raised: What are the training needs of clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units? And what are the urgent training requirements for clinical psychologists working in these units?

Study Objectives

The current study aims to pursue a central goal of assisting the clinical psychologist working in school health screening and follow-up units in their clinical practice by highlighting their training needs. It seeks to train the clinical psychologist on the urgent requirements necessary for effectively addressing emerging behavioral disorders within the school environment.

Additionally, the study intends to enrich scientific research in the field of behavioral sciences by opening avenues for studying the training needs of clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units and expanding the scope of such investigations. It also attempts to address the deficiencies experienced by clinical psychologists following their limited university training, which often does not meet the demands of clinical practice, particularly in school settings.

3.1. Significance of the Study:

Theoretical Importance:

•   To identify, understand, and specify the training needs of clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units.

•   To highlight the urgent training requirements for clinical psychologists working in these units.

- The novelty of the study, as it is among the few investigations on this topic that researchers have not previously explored.

Practical Significance

- To draw the attention of relevant stakeholders to the process of training clinical psychologists working in school health screening and follow-up units.

- The study's results and analyses will benefit health institutions in improving the health sector in general, and school health in particular, by developing training strategies for clinical psychologists in these units to enhance various aspects of their professional practice.

- Training clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units ensures high-quality care for students and promotes their psychological, academic, and overall well-being.

- Raising awareness among health institution officials, especially those involved in school health, about the necessity of involving clinical psychologists in designing training plans, as they have the most intimate knowledge of the nature of their work.

Psychological Significance

- It lies in meeting the training needs of clinical psychologists in their clinical practice within school health screening and follow-up units, enabling them to find their professional standing and avoid feelings of inefficacy, thereby ensuring quality care for students.

Research Methodology

The descriptive method was used alongside content analysis, as it is compatible with the research problem, questions, and objectives. This is a desk study without fieldwork, relying on the analysis of literature related to the topic of training needs for clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units.

Definition of Study Terms

Definition of Training Needs

- **Linguistic definition:** According to the Arabic dictionary, need (احتياج) linguistically means lack or deficiency; need means the shortfall from the required amount (Al-Zubaidi, 1965, p. 29).

- **Operational definition:** Training needs refer to two aspects:

1. Specific information, attitudes, or technical-behavioral skills intended to be developed or modified due to organizational, technological, or human changes; promotions or transfers; expansion or development areas; anticipated problems; or other circumstances requiring appropriate preparation.

2. Real or potential technical or human weaknesses or deficiencies in workers' abilities, knowledge, or attitudes, or specific problems to be solved.

- Need is what is required to complete a deficiency (Abdel Wahab, 1987, p. 66).

- Another definition describes training needs as the sum of changes or additions required in employees' knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors to overcome problems hindering work performance, production, or the organization's general policies (Leslie, 1991, p. 194).

- Training needs are also defined as the required changes in an individual's knowledge, experience, performance, behavior, and attitudes to enable them to perform their current job duties and responsibilities efficiently (Hassan Al-Ta'ani, 2002, p. 29).

- Another definition states that training needs represent "the size of the gap between the actual performance of an individual (in terms of quantity and quality) and the required or targeted performance according to established standards, measures, objectives, and plans" (Hashim Al-Abadi et al., 2006, p. 297).

Accordingly, training needs are the set of positive changes required in the knowledge, experience, emotions, professional and technical skills, capabilities, attitudes, behaviors, and legal rights of clinical psychologists in school health screening and follow-up units through training. This training aims to enable effective psychological practice that meets therapeutic goals for students and equips clinical psychologists with resilience and the capacity to perform their duties efficiently within these units.

Operational Definition of the Clinical Psychologist Specialist

The clinical psychologist specialist is a professional who employs psychological procedures and collaborates with other specialists within the psychological team, each contributing according to their capacities and engaging in positive interaction. The objective is to understand the dynamics of the client's personality, diagnose their problems, predict the potential progression of their condition, and assess their responsiveness to various counseling and treatment methods. Ultimately, the specialist works towards enabling the client to achieve the highest possible level of personal and social adjustment. (Abdel-Moaty, 1998, p. 9)

Operational Definition of the School Health Screening and Follow-up Unit

The screening and follow-up unit is a school-based medical facility equipped with appropriate location, space, and equipment conditions that facilitate the medical team's performance of their duties under suitable circumstances. These units are established within educational institutions under the Directorate of Education upon recommendation from the Directorate of Health. The unit's location may be within an elementary, middle, or secondary school, or alternatively, within a public community health center, where a designated space meeting all required conditions is allocated for its use.

Theoretical Framework:

Training Needs: Human resource management in any institution, regardless of its field of specialization, is not limited to ensuring the optimal use of employees' skills; rather, excellent management also focuses on continuously developing and improving these skills. To achieve this, human resource managers develop a training needs assessment plan that guides them in charting the optimal path for enhancing employee capabilities and increasing their efficiency.

Identification of Training Needs

The process of identifying training needs within an organization constitutes a cornerstone of any training activity. It is the phase during which training programs are planned to satisfy actual needs, and the success or failure of these programs depends on it. If training needs are not identified based on a scientific approach, the programs conducted will fail to meet the needs of individuals within the organization. Consequently, training becomes a formal, non-investment activity aimed merely at publicity, resulting in the waste of time, effort, and financial resources. The organizational unit responsible for managing training within the organization bears the responsibility for determining the necessary amount of training, based on the organization's objectives and policies. This unit must continuously monitor performance-related problems and distinguish those attributable to training deficiencies (which thus represent training needs that must be addressed) from those arising from other causes that training cannot remedy, such as low employee motivation. Training needs can be described as the gap between the expected performance level of individuals and their current level of performance (Leslie, 1994, p. 208). Training needs reflect the presence

of a "problem" within the organization. The existence of such a problem necessarily implies the presence of a "need" that must be identified and addressed. There are three main types of problems that an organization may face:

Present and existing problems: These are problems currently existing within the organization that can be resolved through training, such as the issue of qualifying and training new employees on organizational work methods, or the problem of negative deviations in individual performance rates.

Future problems: Problems that are expected to arise in the future. Examples include changes in the organization's external environment or the anticipated vacancy of certain positions in the near future, which must be filled. Accordingly, training the appropriate employees to occupy these positions is necessary.

Problems of inability to innovate or initiate: These arise when the organization lacks the required effectiveness, threatening the achievement of its goals or its existence and continuity. This type of problem is usually one of the most critical challenges faced by organizations.

The Importance of Identifying Training Needs: The concept of meeting training needs achieves a balance between fulfilling the needs of both employees and employers. It encompasses three important aspects:

• It helps employees develop their skills and enhances their self-confidence.

• It contributes to defining a clear career path and progression ladder for the employee.

• It assists the employer in achieving organizational goals more quickly and efficiently. (Leslie, 1994, p. 214)

Types of Training Needs: The presence of these problems within an institution necessarily indicates the existence of "needs," whether current or future, that the institution must confront. This leads us to state that training needs in any institution can be categorized as follows: a) **Routine Needs:** Related to training new employees and training current employees for purposes such as promotion or transfer to other positions, among others. b) **Needs to Address Weaknesses:** These are needs to confront real or potential technical or human deficiencies in employees' skills, knowledge, or attitudes—essentially needs to resolve immediate or anticipated problems.

c) **Non-traditional Needs:** Sometimes, an institution may not face any conventional problems, whether ordinary or extraordinary, but may still lack the required effectiveness. These needs arise to address the inability to innovate or initiate, keep pace with societal demands, or adapt to modernization.

Identifying and listing the problems faced by the institution leads to two important observations: first, it is necessary to recognize that not all institutional problems can be solved through training; second, it is essential to understand that completely identifying all problems is realistically very challenging. Therefore, the identification of training needs should not be considered final or rigid but must be flexible enough to be adjusted as necessary. (Abu Sheikha, 2010, p. 3)

Methods for Identifying Training Needs: methods are used to determine the necessary training needs, including:

Informal Observation: This involves indirectly observing workers to identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance. A major drawback of this method is that it does not prioritize obtaining accurate information, and employees often misinterpret the motives behind the observation.

Ongoing Discussions with Employees: Engaging employees in continuous conversations and listening to their suggestions and complaints helps to identify the training courses they request to improve their job

performance. This method allows employees to reveal areas of weakness, enabling management to address these through training. However, a disadvantage is that many employees might exploit this method to request excessive training.

Discussions with Supervisors: Supervisors who are familiar with the weaknesses in their subordinates' performance can identify when and where training is needed. A drawback of this method is potential bias by some supervisors, who may favor certain employees by recommending them for more training courses at the expense of others.

Questionnaires: Employees are asked to respond to surveys that identify the problems they face, their causes, and suggestions for solutions. Although this method is low-cost and requires little time to gather information, some questions may be misunderstood, leading to incorrect answers that negatively affect decision-making.

Field Surveys: Conducting field surveys that include a representative sample of all employees in the organization to determine their training needs. While this method is cost-effective, the information obtained may not accurately reflect the actual training needs of all employees, as the sample may not include those who require training. This can result in inaccurate conclusions for decision-making.

Complaints from Labor Unions and Worker Federations: These complaints often stem from frequent work accidents or employees' perceptions that the management does not provide adequate opportunities for self-development or improve their material and social conditions. A disadvantage is that continuous compliance by management with union demands may lead to dependence on unions for training decisions.

Work Performance Evaluation Analysis: This involves comparing actual employee performance against planned metrics in terms of quantity, quality, time, and costs, to identify weaknesses for targeted training. This is considered one of the best methods, though it is criticized because some managers conduct evaluations without discussing them with employees, resulting in employees being unaware of their weaknesses and unable to address them. (Saleh, 2014, pp. 117–118)

Definition of the Clinical Psychologist

A clinical psychologist is defined as "a specialized professional who employs psychological principles, techniques, methods, and procedures, and collaborates with other specialists within the clinical team—such as the physician, psychiatrist, social worker, and psychiatric nurse—each within the limits of their training, preparation, and capabilities, in a positive interaction aimed at understanding the dynamics of the client-patient's personality, diagnosing their problems, predicting the possible course of their condition and their responsiveness to various treatment methods, and ultimately working to help the client achieve the highest possible level of personal and social adjustment" (Fatima Debraso, Issue 11, 2010).

According to Garvid, as emphasized by Barkat Hamza, "The psychologist is, above all, a psychologist who remains loyal to the discipline of psychology in which they are trained and committed to its fundamental values, including those related to scientific research, even though their practical training occurs in clinical settings" (Barkat Hamza, 2008, p. 14).

Definition of the Psychologist in the School Environment: A school psychologist is the individual who directly provides psychological services, including therapeutic interventions, psychological counseling, and the resolution of various psychological issues faced by students within the school. This is particularly important given the psychological developmental changes students experience at each growth stage, which may expose them to problems and changes that lead to anxiety and depression. Some students may also exhibit shyness, fear of confrontation, or suffer from psychological disorders due to family problems or personal issues (François Guite, translated by Shaheen Lotfi, 2000, p. 17).

Objectives of Psychological Services Provided by the Psychologist in School Health Detection and Follow-Up Units:

Given the significant and crucial role of the psychologist within the school environment and considering the services they provide—especially in light of the behavioral and psychological problems increasingly affecting Algerian schools, such as violence, addiction, academic difficulties, and psychological disorders—the American Psychological Association (1982) outlined key frameworks relating to clinical psychological and counseling services in institutions. School psychological services typically encompass one or more services offered to students in educational settings, from kindergarten through the end of their schooling, with the goal of protecting and promoting mental health and facilitating the learning process (Mohamed Ali Kamal, 2003, pp. 32–33).

The most important objectives include:

- Providing a healthy environment that enables students to benefit maximally from the educational process.

- Developing the student's personality across various dimensions—physical, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral.

- Delivering psychological and counseling services to address cases of mild psychological disorders.

- Raising student awareness about different types of deviance and the resulting psychological and social deterioration.

- Assisting students to act in accordance with their abilities and inclinations and training them in new ways of thinking while avoiding deviant thinking patterns.

- Helping students become positive individuals by fostering self-confidence and cultivating positive attitudes about their surroundings.

- Assisting students in acquiring habits and skills to make beneficial use of their free time and adopt effective study methods.

- Providing consultations to school staff and cooperating with the school and parents regarding issues related to their children.

- Early detection of cases suffering from psychological disorders, providing support, and attempting to prevent their progression and exacerbation.

Source: www.moqatea.com/openchar/beHoth/mnfsia15/akhisAnfs.doc (Accessed 2024/04/08, 21:06)

Required Characteristics of the Psychological Specialist:

- **Accurate Understanding:** This refers to the ability of the specialist to comprehend and appreciate the motives of others. When the counselor or therapist understands the motivations of the student being counseled, they empathize with them even if those motives are flawed.

- **Self-Disclosure:** Some mental health professionals view this as a factor that enhances the therapist's effectiveness. By revealing aspects of their own self to the counselee, the counselor deepens the connection between them and serves as a role model for the counselee.

- **Confrontation:** This skill is used by the specialist when they perceive contradictions in the counselee's behavior or when the behavior is unrealistic or biased. (Fah Ben Sanhat Al-Diblaji Al-Otaibi, 2011, p. 45)

Roles of the Psychological Specialist in the School Environment

The psychological specialist in schools is considered a participant in creating an effective school — one that achieves its objectives using its limited resources optimally, adapts to its surrounding ecosystem, and develops its organizational structure. Accordingly, the psychological specialist has several roles within the school, notably:

- **Preventive and Awareness Role:** The presence of the psychological specialist within the school and their participation in the educational process, especially through psychological counseling and addressing students' psychological issues, serves to prevent behavioral deviations before they occur. This is achieved through the three levels of prevention. (François Hayet, 2000, p. 17)

- **Therapeutic Role:** This is the most important role, involving observation of student behavior within educational institutions, either discovered personally or referred by teachers or administrators. Some psychological issues, such as anxiety (exam anxiety), obsessive-compulsive disorder, adolescent problems, behavioral deviations, intellectual disabilities, and others, require intervention by the psychological specialist. The aim here is to diagnose these problems and treat those that can be addressed. In this capacity, the specialist acts as a general practitioner, diagnosing and treating early cases identified within the school health monitoring unit.

(Mohamed Ali Kamel, 2003, p. 33)

- **Diagnostic and Predictive Role:** This involves the specialist's ability to predict behavior, which stems from proficiency in measurement and evaluation tools related to various personality aspects. By using intelligence, cognitive ability, and aptitude tests, the specialist can assess the cognitive dimension of personality and predict the affective or emotional dimension of the student's personality. (Mohamed Ali Kamel, 2003, pp. 33-34)

- **Consultative Role:** This role is highly significant as it supports all other roles. It refers to a professional relationship between the specialist as an expert and the consultation seeker to assist in treating the client's problem, enhancing skills and knowledge, and correcting any previous misinformation. The goal is to enable the client to successfully manage similar problems independently in the future. This role can be direct, through working directly with the client, or indirect, by working with individuals related to the student or involved in solving the problem, such as teachers, parents, or school administration. (François Hayet, 2000, p. 20)

Discussion and Analysis of the Issues

The current school environment faces increasing challenges related to students' mental health, where behavioral and emotional problems have escalated due to intertwined social, economic, and educational factors. The clinical psychological specialist plays a frontline role in addressing these challenges within school health monitoring units. They are responsible for diagnosis, evaluation, and providing appropriate psychological interventions. However, this sensitive role requires high-level academic and professional preparation, which many specialists in the field lack due to insufficient specialized and continuous training programs.
(Hussein, 2020, p. 34)

In this context, Chiarelli (2014) emphasized: "The development of therapeutic mediation practice requires the psychological specialist to be trained and competent both theoretically and practically, in order to understand the dynamics of this transformative process established by specific psychological care models."
(Chiarelli, 2014, p. 868)

Effective practice requires proficiency in applying diagnostic and therapeutic techniques. Numerous studies in this field have pointed out that the clinical psychological profession faces several challenges related to

the quality of academic theoretical and practical training in the use of diagnostic, assessment, and treatment techniques. In his study on psychological culture and the training of psychological specialists in Algeria, Desfrgespaul (1982) noted difficulties in using assessment tools during clinical practice. His research revealed that 52% of specialists relied on projective techniques that did not align with the cultural specificity of Algerian society. Additionally, 26% of specialists showed weaknesses in psychological therapy training. (Belmihoub, 2013) Many prior studies have confirmed that the effectiveness of clinical psychological practice depends largely on the quality of training programs. The main issue is a clear gap between the skills possessed by clinical psychological specialists and those actually required in the school work environment.

This gap is exacerbated by the absence of comprehensive ongoing training covering legal, technical, diagnostic, therapeutic, and personal aspects. Therefore, identifying these needs is a critical necessity to ensure the effectiveness of specialists in fulfilling their clinical role within schools. (Hussein, 2020, p. 42)

First: The Legal Dimension: Familiarity with the laws and regulations governing the profession of the psychological specialist is indispensable, as it places them under direct legal responsibilities related to confidentiality, handling children at risk, and writing psychological reports that may be used in critical decision-making. The psychological specialist is not merely an observer or advisor, but also a stakeholder within a complex system that includes the family, school, legal authorities, and sometimes security or judicial bodies.
Hence, there is a clear need to train specialists on national and international legislation concerning children's rights, reporting mechanisms, privacy regulations, and the ethical responsibilities accompanying their professional interventions. Additionally, they must be familiar with proper legal documentation procedures and report-writing techniques that adhere to accepted standards, ensuring both their professional integrity and   student   safety.
Experiences from developed countries have demonstrated that integrating the legal dimension into academic curricula and ongoing training enhances the specialist's effectiveness and reduces costly professional errors. (Abdullah Abdulazim, 2013, p. 45)

Second: The Technical Dimension: Traditional tools alone are no longer sufficient for assessing psychological cases or monitoring students; it has become essential for psychological specialists to possess advanced technical skills aligned with the digital revolution taking place in educational institutions. Such skills include the use of case management software, psychological databases, remote therapy platforms, and digital assessment tools. (Mustafa, 2021, p. 77) . A specialist's familiarity with active learning methods and innovation in tools—beyond traditional brainstorming, video lectures, educational electronic games, remote workgroups, and virtual school clubs—is critical. (Abdullah Abdulazim, 2013, p. 124) . Weakness in these technical skills results in inaccurate monitoring of students' psychological states and negatively impacts the quality of treatment plans. Therefore, technical training must encompass instruction on psychological analysis software, electronic record management, information security, and fundamentals of working within encrypted   electronic   environments   that   respect   student   privacy.
Equally important is training in professional communication via email, digital report writing, and conducting remote psychological interviews, especially under exceptional circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic and similar crises. (Al-Hadhall, 2020, p. 122)

Third: The Diagnostic and Evaluation Dimension: Diagnosis represents the cornerstone of clinical psychological work, serving as the foundation for treatment decisions and interventions. Psychological diagnosis requires scientific tools and advanced skills in observation, analysis, clinical interviewing, and mastery of standardized psychological measures. (Al-Hadhall, 2020, p. 132). Psychological tests and measures are among the most important techniques relied upon by clinical psychological specialists, due to their specificity in "measuring various psychological characteristics of the examinee." (Dauphin, 1998, p. 4) Hence, psychological specialists must receive in-depth training in using tools such as the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, the Binet Scale, and the MMPI, along with training on correctly interpreting test results without overgeneralization or exaggeration. Moreover, they should learn to integrate information obtained from tests with behavioral observations and family interviews to develop a comprehensive and accurate profile of the student's condition. (Al-Hadhall, 2020, p. 154)

Fourth: The Personal Dimension: It is essential to recognize that the psychological specialist is human first and foremost, susceptible to emotional impact and interaction fatigue, and potentially subject to psychological stress or burnout resulting from ongoing exposure to complex problems. Therefore, developing the personal dimension constitutes an inseparable part of their training needs. (Mustafa, 2021, p. 118) Specialists require programs that enhance self-confidence, develop their ability to regulate emotions, and increase flexibility, empathy, and acceptance of others. Training should also cover time management strategies, crisis management, making sound professional decisions under pressure, as well as relaxation techniques, mindfulness, and psychological stress control. (Mustafa, 2021, p. 154)

Fifth: The Therapeutic Dimension: After the diagnostic phase, the intervention and treatment stage begins. At this point, clinical psychological specialists need training in a range of recognized therapeutic skills, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, family therapy, play therapy, art therapy, and other methods appropriate to the school-age population. (Al-'Ashri, 2022, p. 122). Theoretical training alone is insufficient in this area; clinical practice requires simulated sessions and supervised follow-up of real cases to ensure the specialist acquires precise technical, linguistic, and behavioral skills. Training should also cover how to prepare therapy sessions, set clear goals, measure progress, and adapt treatment methods to the specific school environment. (Hussein, 2020, p. 131). Moreover, the ability to manage behavioral and emotional disorders such as anxiety, depression, aggression, hyperactivity, and adjustment difficulties demands a high level of training and proficiency.

The specialist should not limit themselves to diagnosis only but must also be trained in ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of treatment plans, reviewing applied strategies, and ensuring continuous improvement in professional performance and enhancing positive outcomes for the student. (Hussein, 2020, p. 138)

The more internally stable the specialist is, the more capable they are of helping others. Personal maturity is the solid foundation upon which all other skills are built.

Integration of the Five Training Dimensions: A Holistic Vision

It is important to recognize that the five training dimensions discussed — legal, technical, diagnostic, therapeutic, and personal — are not isolated or independent islands; rather, they are interconnected and mutually influential. When the specialist possesses a solid legal understanding, their therapeutic decisions become more professionally and ethically grounded. When equipped with accurate diagnostic skills supported by technology, their effectiveness in delivering appropriate psychological treatments improves, positively reflecting on their own mental health and enhancing their ability to cope with stress. (Mustafa, 2021, p. 188)

This holistic vision should be reflected in training programs designed for psychological specialists in screening and follow-up units. These programs must be multifaceted, integrating theoretical workshops with practical applications, and including up-to-date content aligned with global and local developments.

Currently, given the urgent need for psychological specialists in school health screening and follow-up units, there are pressing training needs at this level. These needs enable specialists to effectively manage cases identified in these units. The concept of training is closely tied to training needs. According to Abdel Hamid (2016), the primary goal of training is to fulfill the needs of the clinical or trainee psychological specialist. Successful and effective training cannot occur without identifying and assessing these training needs. These needs represent the changes and developments required to achieve a balance between the specialist's views, their job function, and therapeutic objectives. In fact, no training activity has value unless there is a genuine need for it.

The Clinical Psychologist's Need for Psychological Therapies Training

One of the most critical training needs for the clinical psychologist in professional practice is mastering psychological therapies. This necessity arises because, throughout a student's academic journey, they may encounter pressures that affect their psychological stability and behavior, potentially causing adjustment

problems at some stage of their schooling. This situation calls for intervention by the school health team to assist the student and investigate the underlying causes of such behavior. This role is fulfilled by the clinical psychologist working within school health screening and follow-up units. (Safah & Alaq, 2019, p. 6)

The lack of university-level training in various psychological techniques and therapies—especially modern approaches—places the clinical psychologist in a difficult position when faced with a client expecting adequate psychological support aligned with their disorders. The client anticipates that the psychologist will possess up-to-date therapeutic techniques that help understand, accept, and resolve their psychological issues promptly. (Hayes et al., 2012) Clinical practice deals with the human psychological experience in its subjective and objective dimensions, considering the individual's personal history and their temporal experience spanning past, present, and future. Effective psychological treatment is particularly necessary in the school setting. (Abbas, 1996)

Training in effective and contemporary psychological therapies has become increasingly urgent, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)—also known as the "third wave" of cognitive-behavioral therapies. These newer therapies integrate traditional CBT techniques with mindfulness processes. While traditional CBT targets thoughts aiming to change and restructure them, these modern therapies adopt a different approach by focusing on the relationship between the person and their thoughts and emotions. Clinical psychologists need to include these therapies in their training toolkit because they provide clear, protocol-driven methods to manage and treat disorders. These protocols are based on models, such as those by Hayes and colleagues, which emphasize the context and function of psychological events rather than their content, form, or frequency. (Hayes et al., 2012)

Furthermore, Hayes et al. (2006) state that psychological therapies aim to enhance psychological flexibility—the ability to connect with the present moment without constraint and within the current context, facilitating change or persistence in actions aligned with desired values. Behavioral responses to internal experiences shaped by strong reliance on verbal rules and involuntary inflexibility may pose problems by restricting behavior and opportunities for external reinforcement for the student, leading to a diminished quality of life. Psychological therapies foster the student's ability to be present and cope with anxiety flexibly. The strategies followed emphasize what is important to the student, particularly in the school environment, and what can be done to increase behavioral flexibility in this context. Psychological therapies targeting psychological flexibility serve as a practical goal in treating many clinical and school-related problems. (Bluett et al., 2014)

Conclusion

Establishing an effective training system for clinical psychologists within screening and follow-up units is not a luxury, but rather a necessity dictated by the rapid psychological and behavioral changes experienced by today's generation. Given that mental health forms the foundation upon which all learning and success components rely, the responsibility of preparing specialists in a scientific, legal, and comprehensive therapeutic manner rests on the shoulders of all stakeholders—starting from policymakers, passing through educational and health institutions, and culminating with the specialists themselves, who must view training as an opportunity for both professional and personal growth.

Perhaps the highest aspiration we can aim for is the transformation of screening and follow-up units into environments enriched with continuous learning, where specialists feel they are not merely implementers of policies but genuine partners in shaping the mental health of future generations.

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