

## Family Counseling: A Theoretical Overview

Dr. Falah Yamina <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Moumen Bekkouche Djemoui <sup>2</sup>, Pr. Bellamouchi Abderrazak <sup>3</sup> Pr. Djelloul Ahmed <sup>4</sup>, Pr. Mazouz Abdelhalim <sup>5</sup>, Pr. Messaouda Montasser <sup>6</sup>, Pr. Samy Meguellati<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of El Oued (Algeria). Email: [falah-yamina@univ-eloued.dz](mailto:falah-yamina@univ-eloued.dz)

<sup>2</sup>University of El Oued (Algeria). Email: [moumenb-djemoui@univ-eloued.dz](mailto:moumenb-djemoui@univ-eloued.dz)

<sup>3</sup>University of El Oued (Algeria). Email: [Bellamouchi-Abderrazak@univ-eloued.dz](mailto:Bellamouchi-Abderrazak@univ-eloued.dz)

<sup>4</sup>University of El Oued (Algeria). Email: [ahmed-djelloul@univ-eloued.dz](mailto:ahmed-djelloul@univ-eloued.dz)

<sup>5</sup>Mohamed Lamin Debaghine University of Setif2 (Algeria). Email: [a.mazouz@univ-setif2.dz](mailto:a.mazouz@univ-setif2.dz)

<sup>6</sup>University of El Oued, (Algeria). Email: [messaouda-montasser@univ-eloued.dz](mailto:messaouda-montasser@univ-eloued.dz)

<sup>7</sup>University of constantine2(Algeria). Email: [samy.meguellati@univ-constantine2.dz](mailto:samy.meguellati@univ-constantine2.dz)

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Social Development and Community Service Laboratory

<sup>6</sup> Cognitive and Social Neuropsychology Laboratory

Received : 04/11/2025 ; Accepted : 21/03/2026 ; Published : 28/04/2026

### Abstract:

This article examines families counseling as an applied area of psychological counseling that aims to support families and improve interaction among their members. The article reviews the historical development of this field, indicating that it emerged within the systemic shift that took place in family therapy during the 1950s, when attention began to move from focusing solely on the individual toward viewing the family as a system of relationships and interactions. It also explains how these systemic concepts were later incorporated into counseling psychology during the 1960s and 1970s, with an increasing emphasis on growth, adjustment, and the improvement of family communication, until family counseling gradually developed into a professional specialization concerned with strengthening family relationships and enhancing interaction skills within the family.

The article also discusses the concept of family counseling and its main characteristics, distinguishes it from family therapy and marital counseling, and highlights its importance, objectives, and major areas of application in addressing various family-related problems. The article concludes that family counseling represents an important approach to strengthening family cohesion and promoting the psychological and social well-being of family members.

**key words:** Family Counseling, Family Relationships, Family Therapy, Marital Counseling, Family Adjustment.

## **1 - Introduction:**

Family counseling is considered one of the applied fields of psychological counseling. Given the central role played by the family in shaping the individual's personality and directing his or her social and emotional behavior, the family represents the first framework within which the individual learns patterns of social interaction, values, and norms, and it also constitutes the primary environment that influences individuals' mental health. Hence, scientific interest emerged in studying family relationships, attempting to understand their dynamics, and developing counseling methods that help families improve their interactions and deal with the problems they may face.

Family counseling has developed gradually through a historical trajectory that began with the systemic shift in family therapy during the middle of the twentieth century, followed by the re-employment of these concepts within the field of psychological counseling, until it later crystallized into a relatively independent professional specialization focused on supporting the family and enhancing positive interaction among its members.

In this context, this article seeks to provide a theoretical introduction to family counseling by presenting its historical development, defining its concept, distinguishing it from some related concepts such as family therapy and marital counseling, in addition to highlighting its importance, objectives, and fields of application.

## **2 - History of Family Counseling:**

### **2-1 Stage One: Early Roots (Before the 1950s)**

Before the emergence of family therapy in the 1950s, there were early efforts that can be considered as seeds of family counseling thinking, even though they did not bear this designation in its modern scientific form (Carlson, 2017).

Alfred Adler is considered among the first to provide counseling services to families in the modern era. Following World War I (starting in 1919), he established thirty-two psychological clinics in Vienna (Taylor, 2018). These clinics provided services for children, parents, and families, focusing on resolving school and behavioral problems within a collaborative framework involving the child, the family, and the school, while adopting the method of open discussion (Maricopa, 2020). This approach was characterized by a preventive, educational, and developmental orientation, making it one of the true beginnings of family counseling.

Later, Rudolf Dreikurs transferred Adler's ideas to the United States, where he developed what became known as Family Education and Training Centers. He focused on understanding the dynamics

of children's behavior, guiding parents, and analyzing patterns of maladaptive behavior within their family context (Maricopa, 2020).

During the 1930s, the features of institutional organization in family counseling began to emerge. The first family counseling center was established in Los Angeles in 1930 by Paul Popenoe (Oxford Academic, 2001). Similarly, the first marriage counseling center was established in New York by Abraham Stone and Hannah Stone. These initiatives had a preventive and counseling character, yet they were not framed within an integrated systemic theoretical model (Nichols & Davis, 2020). Nevertheless, it should be noted that despite their counseling nature, these efforts did not yet represent the emergence of family counseling as an independent scientific discipline. Rather, they were preliminary practices of a preventive and educational nature that preceded the theoretical and methodological crystallization that would later appear with the development of family therapy and subsequently family counseling (Goldenberg et al., 2017).

## **2–2 Stage Two: The Shift Toward Systemic Thinking (During the 1950s)**

In the mid-twentieth century, a significant shift occurred in the understanding of psychological problems. The dominant model had been individualistic, focusing on psychoanalysis, individual therapy, and medical diagnosis (Nichols & Davis, 2020). However, clinical practice—particularly in work with children, adolescents, and some severe cases associated with schizophrenia research—revealed that treating the individual in isolation from their family may not yield stable results, as the individual returns to a family context that may contribute to the persistence or exacerbation of difficulties (Goldenberg et al., 2017).

This led a number of psychiatrists and researchers to shift their attention from the individual to the family as an interactive system (Becvar & Becvar, 2000). Among the most prominent pioneers of this stage are Nathan Ackerman, who is considered one of the founders of family therapy and attempted to integrate psychoanalysis with the systemic perspective (Ackerman, 1958); Murray Bowen, who focused on the concepts of differentiation and emotional fusion (Bowen, 1978); Salvador Minuchin, who developed the structural model focusing on boundaries, subsystems, and alliances (Minuchin, 1974); and Theodore Lidz, who studied marital patterns in families associated with schizophrenia and formulated concepts such as marital skew and marital schism (Lidz et al., 1957).

Among the historical concepts used to understand family dynamics are:

**Emotional Fusion (Murray Bowen):** refers to a state of excessive merging among family members in which psychological boundaries become unclear, preventing the individual from developing a distinct sense of self, thereby hindering independence and generating chronic anxiety (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

**Marital Skew and Marital Schism (Theodore Lidz):** marital skew refers to an unequal marital relationship dominated by one partner, whereas marital schism refers to a conflictual pattern in which

each partner attempts to align the children with themselves, resulting in distorted alliances (Lidz et al., 1957).

Pseudomutuality (developed by Lyman Wynne and colleagues): refers to apparent cohesion that masks emotional shallowness and suppression of genuine feelings (Wynne et al., 1958).

Double Bind (developed by Gregory Bateson and his team): refers to a communication pattern involving contradictory messages that place the individual in a no-win situation, where any response is deemed incorrect (Bateson et al., 1956).

These concepts are presented here as a historical milestone in the development of systemic therapeutic thinking, not as a single causal explanation of psychological disorders.

In conclusion, this stage belongs more to the history of family therapy than to family counseling; however, it provided the theoretical foundation for viewing the family as a unit of interaction (Becvar & Becvar, 2000).

This stage can be summarized as follows: during the 1950s, mental health professionals began to observe that treating individuals in isolation from their families did not consistently produce stable outcomes. This led to a shift from focusing solely on the individual to studying the family as a system of relationships and interactions. This transformation was led by pioneers such as Ackerman, Bowen, Minuchin, and Lidz, who developed concepts for understanding family dynamics, including emotional fusion, marital skew and schism, and pseudomutuality.

Although this stage was primarily rooted in clinical family therapy and focused on severe disorders such as schizophrenia, it laid the theoretical foundation for what would later become family counseling, which views the family as a system that can be supported and its relationships improved. Before the 1950s, psychotherapy focused exclusively on the individual.

Specialists recognized the strong influence of the family on psychological problems.

A new orientation emerged viewing the family as a system of relationships and interactions.

This stage was primarily therapeutic but paved the way for the later emergence of family counseling. Thus, the 1950s marked a significant shift in understanding psychological problems, moving from treating the individual in isolation to considering the impact of family interactions. Although rooted in therapy, this stage laid the theoretical groundwork for the later emergence of family counseling as an approach focused on enhancing family interaction, adaptation, and growth.

### **2–3 Stage Three: Re-employment of Concepts within Counseling Psychology (1960s–1970s)**

After systemic concepts emerged within a therapeutic context during the 1950s, they were gradually reformulated and employed within counseling psychology during the 1960s and 1970s (Gladding, 2019). As counseling applications expanded, attention shifted from illness and disorder toward growth, adjustment, and the improvement of human relationships. This shift was accompanied by

changes in discourse and intervention perspectives, moving from a focus on diagnosis and treatment to communication, support, and the development of family resources (Nichols & Davis, 2020).

The family was no longer viewed as the source of the problem, but rather as a system of relationships that could be supported and improved, reflecting a transition from a pathological to a developmental perspective in working with families (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2017).

This transformation facilitated the emergence of family counseling as a less therapeutic and more developmental orientation. Professionals began to apply systemic concepts such as fusion, boundaries, and alliances within the context of supporting ordinary families undergoing transitional life stages, including marriage, childbearing, adolescence, and retirement (Nichols & Davis, 2020).

Counseling programs also emerged aiming to develop family communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and positive parenting practices, reflecting a shift from explaining disorder to improving family interaction and enhancing adaptation (Gladding, 2019).

Thus, this stage represents the turning point at which family counseling began to emerge as an intervention aimed at supporting ordinary families within a developmental and preventive framework distinct from the therapeutic orientation of the previous stage.

#### **2–4 Stage Four: The Crystallization of Family Counseling as a Professional Field (1970s–Present)**

Beginning in the 1970s, family counseling gained a clearer position within counseling psychology programs in universities and social and psychological service centers. The field gradually shifted toward supporting family relationships and developing interaction skills rather than focusing exclusively on treating psychological disorders (Goldenberg et al., 2017).

At this stage, attention focused on several key areas of intervention:

Developing family communication skills, such as active listening, emotional expression, and collaborative problem-solving.

Assisting families in coping with life and transitional crises, such as divorce, loss, unemployment, and life-cycle changes (Nichols & Davis, 2020).

Supporting parental roles and promoting positive parenting practices.

Providing premarital counseling and guidance during transitional family stages (Gladding, 2019).

Professional organizations also played a significant role in regulating practice in this field, most notably:

The American Counseling Association (ACA), which contributed to establishing standards for counselor training and preparation.

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), which represents the field of family therapy and contributes to the development of clinical practice.

This development led to a relative professional distinction between:

**Family Therapist:** focuses on treating psychological disorders and complex family problems using specialized therapeutic approaches (Goldenberg et al., 2017).

**Family Counselor:** works with individuals and families facing adaptive difficulties or seeking to improve communication and interaction skills within a developmental and preventive framework (Capuzzi & Stauffer, 2016).

Thus, since the 1970s, family counseling has become a clearly defined professional field within counseling psychology, focusing on supporting family relationships, enhancing communication skills, and helping families adapt to life challenges, with a relative distinction between counseling and therapeutic practice (Gladding, 2019).

This historical trajectory demonstrates that family counseling did not emerge suddenly as an independent discipline; rather, it developed gradually, beginning with the systemic shift in family therapy, followed by the re-employment of these concepts within counseling psychology, and eventually crystallizing into a professional field focused on supporting family interaction and development.

Accordingly, family counseling did not arise as an opposition to family therapy, but rather as a later development that redirected attention from explaining disorder to supporting interaction and enhancing growth and adaptation within the family.

### **3 - The Concept of Family Counseling:**

#### **3 - 1 - Definition of the German Dictionary of Psychology, Dorsch:**

Family counseling is a counseling process that addresses family members and their actual interactional problems, in which counseling procedures are carried out with family members collectively, and individual therapy or counseling may sometimes be used when the family's influence on the individual is not strong (Hacker, 2004).

#### **3 - 2 - Lebow's Definition:**

Family counseling is a form of counseling or therapeutic intervention characterized by a degree of complexity compared with other types of intervention, because it deals with more than one client at the same time, namely family members, and it involves issues such as confidentiality and the boundaries of the relationship between the counselor and family members (Lebow, 2005).

#### **3 - 3 - Chose's Definition:**

Family counseling is an organized scientific method that focuses on family maladjustment associated with dysfunctional family functioning, and it works with the family as a whole unit with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of family functioning (Al-Sayyid, 1991).

### **3 - 4 - Wolman's Definition:**

Family counseling is a counseling process conducted within the family as a single unit, and it includes a group of individuals who meet with the counselor to discuss the dynamics of the relationships and interactions among them (Wolman, 1977).

### **3 - 5 - Reber's Definition:**

Family counseling is a comprehensive counseling approach that addresses the family as a whole unit and focuses on the individuals who receive counseling within the family system (Reber, 1985).

### **3 - 6 - Corsini Encyclopedia Definition:**

Family counseling is an attempt to modify relationships within the family system, because family problems are often the result of inappropriate family interactions and not the result of a problem in only one individual (Corsini, 1996).

### **3 - 7 - Sautherland Dictionary Definition:**

Family counseling is a counseling process that deals with the family as a group with the aim of improving family members' understanding of themselves and their mutual relationships (Sautherland, 1996).

### **3 - 8 - Hamid Abdel Salam Zahran's Definition:**

Family counseling is a helping process for family members (parents and children) to understand family life and its responsibilities, achieve family stability and adjustment, and solve problems (Zahran, 1988).

### **3 - 9 - Al-Barithan's Definition:**

Family counseling is an organized helping process provided by a specialized counselor to help individuals and families solve problems and achieve family stability and adjustment (Al-Barithan, 2008).

### **3 - 10 - Khadr's Definition:**

Family counseling is a process carried out by the counselor or the counseling team to help family members understand their social relationships and develop their capacities in order to reach suitable solutions to their problems (Khadr, 2008).

From the previous definitions, despite their differences, we find that they share a number of elements and agree on a set of basic characteristics:

Family counseling is an organized professional process.

The family is dealt with as an interactive unit.

It includes more than one family member.

It aims to improve family relationships and interaction.

It helps the family solve problems and achieve adjustment and stability.

Accordingly, it can be said that family counseling is an organized professional process carried out by a specialized counselor to help family members understand the nature of their relationships and mutual interactions, work on improving communication among them, develop their ability to solve problems, and achieve adjustment and stability within the family system.

That is, family counseling is a professional helping process that deals with the family as an interactive unit with the aim of improving family relationships and helping its members solve problems and achieve family adjustment.

Thus, family counseling is a systematic and planned helping process that deals with the family as an integrated interactive system (whether through working with all its members or with some of them), with the aim of improving the quality of interactions and relationships within the family, understanding its dynamics, developing its communication and problem-solving skills, and helping it overcome crises and transitional stages in a way that achieves family stability and the psychological adjustment of its members. It contributes to preventing problems and enhancing the mental health of the family as a whole. This intervention is based on scientific foundations and multiple theories, is practiced by a qualified specialist, and may extend to include marital counseling as an essential part of it, while distinguishing it from family therapy, which focuses on severe psychological disorders.

#### **4 - The Difference Between Family Counseling, Family Therapy, and Marital Counseling:**

There is often confusion among these three concepts because they share one subject, namely the family and the relationships within it. However, each has a different nature of intervention and different objectives, despite some overlap in certain cases.

##### **4 - 1 - Family Counseling:**

It is a preventive or developmental counseling helping process aimed at improving relationships within the family and helping its members understand their problems and deal with them in a positive way.

It is characterized by the following features:

It focuses on ordinary life problems within the family.

It targets families that are close to psychological normality.

It focuses on family adjustment and the development of communication skills.

It relies on counseling and educational methods.

For example: parenting problems, weak family communication, adolescent conflicts, adjustment to stages of family life.

##### **4 - 2 - Family Therapy:**

Family therapy is a specialized psychotherapeutic intervention aimed at treating psychological disorders or deep family problems through working with the family as an interactive system.

It is characterized by the following features:

It deals with psychological or emotional problems of greater severity.

It may deal with clear psychological disorders.

It uses specialized psychotherapeutic techniques.

It is often carried out in clinics or psychotherapy centers.

For example: severe behavioral disorders, psychological disorders in one family member, acute family conflicts.

#### **4 - 3 - Marital Counseling:**

Marital counseling is a counseling process directed toward spouses with the aim of helping them improve their marital relationship and solve the problems that may disturb marital life.

Among its areas are:

Marital conflicts.

Poor communication between spouses.

Preparation for marriage.

Adjustment to married life.

Accordingly, marital counseling is considered part of family counseling because the marital relationship represents the basic nucleus of the family.

It can also be said that family counseling focuses on prevention and adjustment, whereas family therapy focuses on treating disorders and deep problems, and marital counseling focuses on the relationship between spouses. Despite these differences, the three fields complement one another in supporting family stability and improving relationships within it.

#### **5 - The Importance of Family Counseling:**

The importance of family counseling stems from the fundamental role played by the family in society, as it is the first social group in which the individual grows up, and through it his or her personality, values, and patterns of social interaction are formed. Therefore, any disturbance or dysfunction in family relationships may directly affect the mental health of its members and the stability of society. Moreover, many psychological and behavioral problems may be linked to family factors or to an unbalanced family environment, which makes family counseling an important means for preventing and addressing problems.

##### **5 - 1 - The Importance of Family Counseling at the Individual Level:**

Family counseling helps the individual to:

Improve mental health and emotional balance.

Enhance the sense of belonging and family security.

Develop communication and social interaction skills.

Prevent behavioral deviations such as delinquency or violence.

### **5 - 2 - The Importance of Family Counseling at the Family Level:**

Family counseling contributes to:

Improving relationships among family members.

Reducing marital conflicts.

Enhancing sound parental socialization styles.

Achieving family stability and adjustment.

### **5 - 3 - The Importance of Family Counseling at the Societal Level:**

Family counseling helps society through:

Reducing family disintegration.

Preventing social problems and deviance.

Supporting social stability.

Contributing to the upbringing of psychologically and socially healthy individuals.

### **5 - 4 - Some Problems That Highlight the Need for Family Counseling:**

There are a number of factors that make family counseling a social necessity, the most prominent of which are:

Unsound parental socialization styles.

Ongoing marital conflicts.

Psychological, economic, and social pressures.

Unemployment of one of the parents.

Marital infidelity.

Cultural disparity between spouses.

Weak sexual culture among spouses.

Interference of the extended family in the life of the new family.

Large numbers of children and poor family planning.

Addiction or excessive smoking in one family member.

Cases of divorce or separation.

Major life transitions such as the transition from childhood to adolescence or from singlehood to marriage.

In general, it can be said that the importance of family counseling lies in the fact that it contributes to achieving balance within the family and improving relationships among its members, which is positively reflected in individuals' mental health and in the stability of society.

### **6 - Objectives of Family Counseling:**

Family counseling seeks to achieve a set of objectives aimed at improving relationships within the family, enhancing its ability to face problems, and achieving adjustment and stability. Among the most important of these objectives are the following:

**6 - 1 - Bringing About Positive Change Within the Family:**

Family counseling seeks to bring about positive change in family relationships and improve interaction patterns among family members in a way that helps them understand their problems and deal with them better.

**6 - 2 - Helping Family Members Achieve Healthy Growth:**

Family counseling aims to help family members achieve sound psychological and social growth and develop positive relationships among themselves in a way that achieves happiness and family stability.

**6 - 3 - Guiding Parents in Raising Children:**

Family counseling helps parents understand the characteristics of children's developmental stages and adopt sound socialization methods and care for children's psychological and social growth.

**6 - 4 - Teaching Sound Methods of Socialization:**

Family counseling contributes to introducing parents to modern educational methods that help build a balanced personality in children.

**6 - 5 - Solving Family Problems and Disorders:**

Family counseling works to help the family identify the causes of family problems and work toward finding appropriate solutions for them.

**6 - 6 - Achieving Psychological Adjustment Within the Family:**

Family counseling helps achieve psychological balance and emotional adjustment among family members.

**6 - 7 - Protecting the Family from Disintegration and Collapse:**

Family counseling contributes to strengthening family cohesion and preventing conflicts that may lead to family disintegration.

**6 - 8 - Helping Family Members Adopt Positive Behaviors:**

Family counseling helps individuals modify maladaptive behaviors and acquire positive behavioral patterns that help them solve their problems.

**6 - 9 - Helping the Family Face Social Pressures:**

Family counseling helps the family deal with psychological and social pressures and life changes that may affect its stability.

**6 - 10 - Developing Family Cohesion:**

Family counseling works to strengthen the spirit of cooperation and understanding among family members.

### **6 - 11 - Making Family Members Aware of Their Roles and Responsibilities:**

Family counseling helps clarify the role and responsibilities of each individual within the family in a way that enhances balance within the family.

### **6 - 12 - Satisfying the Psychological Needs of Family Members:**

Family counseling contributes to providing a family climate characterized by love, respect, and positive interaction.

### **6 - 13 - Helping Parents Develop Sound Behavioral Patterns in Children:**

It helps parents develop positive behavior in children.

### **6 - 14 - Supporting Parents in Solving Children's Problems:**

Family counseling provides guidance that helps parents deal properly with children's behavioral problems.

### **6 - 15 - Developing Communication Skills Within the Family:**

Family counseling helps parents acquire effective dialogue and communication skills with children.

### **6 - 16 - Helping Parents Understand Children's Feelings:**

Family counseling helps enhance emotional understanding within the family.

### **6 - 17 - Achieving Family Balance and Stability:**

Family counseling contributes to achieving stability and continuity in family life.

### **6 - 18 - Helping the Family Make Future Decisions:**

Family counseling helps family members make appropriate decisions related to the future and to economic and social life.

Therefore, it can be said that the basic objective of family counseling is to achieve adjustment and stability within the family by improving relationships among its members and helping them face problems in a positive manner.

## **7 - Fields of Family Counseling:**

Studies and research in the field of family counseling indicate the multiplicity of areas with which this specialization is concerned, as it seeks to address the various problems that may face the family and its members. The most important fields of family counseling can be summarized as follows:

### **7 - 1 - Preparation and Qualification of Family Counselors:**

Many studies have addressed the scientific and professional preparation of family counselors because of its importance in improving the quality of counseling services. These studies have focused on:

Identifying the family counselor's needs during training.

Developing skills for dealing with children's and youths' problems.

Training counselors to use modern family counseling methods.

These studies have shown that the effectiveness of family counseling depends to a large extent on the competence of the counselor and his or her scientific and professional preparation.

#### **7 - 2 - Family Counseling for Solving Specific Family Problems:**

Some studies have addressed family counseling as an effective means of dealing with various family problems such as: family conflicts, divorce and post-divorce issues, and children's behavioral disorders. The results of these studies have confirmed that family counseling contributes to improving family relationships and reducing conflicts within the family.

#### **7 - 3 - Family Counseling for Addressing Children's Problems:**

Dealing with children's problems is one of the most important fields of family counseling, as counseling programs seek to help parents deal with children's behaviors, reduce aggressive or disturbed behavior in children, and improve relationships between parents and children.

Studies have shown that family participation in the counseling process contributes clearly to improving children's behavior and modifying family interaction patterns.

#### **7 - 4 - Family Counseling for Addressing Adolescents' Problems:**

Some studies have focused on the problem of adolescent delinquency and their adjustment difficulties, as counseling programs have concentrated on improving communication between adolescents and their families, reducing deviant behaviors, and developing family interaction skills. The results of these studies have shown that family counseling leads to reducing delinquency among adolescents and improving relationships within the family.

#### **7 - 5 - Developing Family Relationships:**

Developing family relationships is a fundamental field of family counseling, as counseling programs aim to promote positive interaction among family members, improve marital relationships, and support family cohesion.

Studies have confirmed that healthy family relationships represent a fundamental factor in achieving the psychological and social adjustment of family members.

#### **7 - 6 - Modifying Family Attitudes:**

Family counseling also focuses on modifying negative attitudes within the family, especially parental attitudes toward children. Studies have shown that counseling programs contribute to changing incorrect educational attitudes, improving methods of dealing with children, and supporting children's psychological growth.

#### **7 - 7 - Family Counseling in Multicultural Societies:**

Some studies have focused on family counseling under conditions of cultural plurality, especially in societies that include different cultural groups. This field focuses on understanding the family's cultural

values, taking into account the cultural background of counselees, and developing the counselor's skills in dealing with cultural diversity.

#### **7 - 8 - Family Counseling for Addressing Addiction and Substance Abuse:**

Family counseling also addresses the problem of drug and substance abuse, as counseling programs help the family support individuals suffering from addiction, strengthen family bonds, and contribute to the prevention of behavioral deviance.

#### **7 - 9 - Family Counseling in the Relationship Between the Family and the School:**

Cooperation between the family and the school is one of the important fields of family counseling, as it seeks to enhance communication between the family and educational institutions, help parents follow up on their children academically, and address behavioral problems within the school.

#### **7 - 10 - Family Counseling for Persons with Special Needs:**

Family counseling is also concerned with supporting the families of children with special needs by training parents to deal with disability, improving communication skills with the disabled child, and supporting the family psychologically and socially.

Studies have shown that counseling programs help families adjust positively to disability and improve the level of care provided to the child.

It is clear from these fields that family counseling is a broad field that encompasses various aspects of family life and aims to strengthen family cohesion, improve relationships among family members, and help them face psychological and social challenges.

#### **Conclusion:**

It is clear from this presentation that family counseling is an important field in psychology and psychological counseling, given the role it plays in supporting the family and improving the quality of interaction among its members. The historical trajectory of this field has shown that it emerged in the context of the systemic shift that family therapy witnessed during the middle of the twentieth century, when attention began to move from focusing on the individual to viewing the family as a system of relationships and interactions. This trend later developed within the field of psychological counseling to take on a developmental and preventive character that focuses on enhancing family communication and improving relationships within the family.

The article also showed that family counseling is based on a set of conceptual foundations that view the family as an integrated interactive unit and seek to help it understand the dynamics of relationships among its members and develop communication and problem-solving skills in a way that achieves family adjustment and stability. The importance of this field is highlighted by the fact that it

contributes to the prevention of many psychological and social problems and enhances individuals' mental health by supporting the family environment, which is considered the first framework for personality development and the formation of social relationships.

In light of the rapid social and cultural transformations taking place in contemporary societies, the need is increasing to develop family counseling programs and expand their fields of application in educational, social, and health institutions, in a way that contributes to strengthening family cohesion and supporting social stability. The importance of continuing scientific research in this field also stands out in order to deepen understanding of the dynamics of family relationships and develop more effective counseling methods for dealing with the challenges facing the family in the modern era.

### **Recommendations:**

In light of what has been presented regarding family counseling in terms of its emergence, concept, importance, objectives, and fields of application, a set of recommendations can be offered that may contribute to the development of this field and strengthen its role in supporting the family and society. The most prominent of these are as follows:

Strengthening academic interest in family counseling by introducing specialized courses in psychology and psychological counseling programs in universities, in a way that contributes to preparing qualified personnel to work in this field.

Developing specialized training programs for family counselors aimed at developing their professional skills in dealing with different family problems and enhancing their competence in using modern counseling methods.

Encouraging scientific research in the field of family counseling through conducting field studies that address contemporary family problems and effective counseling intervention methods for dealing with them.

Strengthening the role of social and educational institutions in providing family counseling services to families, especially in schools and psychological and social counseling centers.

Spreading societal awareness of the importance of family counseling through educational programs and media, with the aim of helping families understand the nature of healthy family relationships and methods of dealing with problems within the family.

Paying attention to premarital counseling programs because of their important role in preparing couples for family life and enhancing marital stability.

Encouraging cooperation between the family and educational institutions such as the school, because of its positive impact on supporting the psychological and social growth of children and adolescents.

Developing family counseling services within health and social institutions in a way that contributes to preventing family problems and enhancing adjustment and stability within the family.

## References

- Ackerman, Nathan. (1958). *The Psychodynamics of Family Life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowen, Murray. (1978). *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.
- Minuchin, Salvador. (1974). *Families and Family Therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lidz, Theodore, Fleck, Stephen, & Cornelison, Alice. (1965). *Schizophrenia and the Family*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Wynne, Lyman, Ryckoff, Irma, Day, James, & Hirsch, Stanley. (1958). Pseudo-Mutuality in the Family Relations of Schizophrenics. *Psychiatry*, 21(2), 205-220.
- Nichols, Michael, & Davis, Sean. (2020). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*. Boston: Pearson.
- Goldenberg, Irene, Goldenberg, Herbert, & Stanton, Mark. (2017). *Family Therapy: An Overview*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Gladding, Samuel. (2019). *Family Therapy: History, Theory, and Practice*. Boston: Pearson.
- Corey, Gerald. (2021). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Al-Omar, Khalid Youssef. (2019). *Family Counseling*. Damascus: Damascus University Publications.
- Hecker, F., & Stapf, K. (2004). *Dictionary of Psychology*. Berlin: Springer Publishing.
- Lebow, J. (2005). *Family Therapy: History, Theory, and Practice*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- El-Sayed, Mohamed et al. (1991). *Family Counseling*. Cairo: Egyptian Renaissance Library.
- Wolman, B. (1977). *Encyclopedia of Psychology*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Reber, A. (1985). *Dictionary of Psychology*. London: Penguin Books.
- Corsini, R. (1996). *Encyclopedia of Psychology*. New York: Wiley Publishing.
- Sautherland, S. (1996). *Dictionary of Psychology*. London: Macmillan Press.
- Zahran, Hamed Abd El-Salam. (1998). *Psychological Counseling*. Cairo: Alam Al-Kutub.
- Al-Buraitin, Abdulaziz bin Abdullah. (2008). *Family Counseling*. Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk Publishing.
- Khidr, Abdel Basset Metwally. (2008). *Family Counseling*. Cairo: Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.
- Hassan, Mohamed Abdullah. (2012). *Marital and Family Counseling*. Riyadh: Dar Al-Zahraa Publishing.

- University of Al-Qadisiyah. (2017). Family Counseling and Its Impact on Achieving Positive Interaction within the Family. Iraq: University of Al-Qadisiyah.
- Taha, Mohamed et al. (1993). Psychological and Family Counseling. Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Library.
- Thrash. (1990). Preparing Family Counselors to Deal with Children and Youth Problems.
- Asana. (1990). Family Counseling and Marriage and Family Problems in Africa.
- Rischlin. (1991). The Role of the Family Counselor in Dealing with Children's Problems.
- Gladding. (1999). Family Counseling and Its Methods in Family Life.
- Robbins, & Carter. (1998). Generations Building Program for Behavior Modification in Students.
- Marcus et al. (1990). Effectiveness of Family Counseling and Therapy in Solving Family Problems.
- Henggeler et al. (1992). The Effect of Family Counseling Programs on Reducing Delinquent Behavior.
- Ronald's. (1995). Family Counseling After Divorce and Its Effect on Reducing Family Conflicts.
- Stinnes et al. (1996). Family Counseling for Dealing with Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
- Crawford. (1999). The Role of Family Counseling in Reducing Suicidal Behavior.
- Howard et al. (1990). Family Programs for Reducing Aggressive Behavior in Children.
- Alan. (1998). Family Educational Programs for Modifying Aggressive Behavior.
- Blain. (1993). Family Counseling and Adolescent Problems.
- May. (1995). The Effect of Family Counseling on Improving Communication Patterns in Adolescents.
- Lawson, & Gaushell. (1991). Family Relationships and Psychological Adjustment.
- Seitz, & Apfel. (1994). The Effect of Parental Intervention on Modifying Family Behavior.
- Jones. (1998). Cultural Sensitivity in Family Counseling.
- Hudson. (1997). Family Counseling and Substance Abuse Treatment.
- Lewis. (1996). Family Counseling in Addressing School Behavioral Problems.
- Walker. (1990). The Role of Family Counseling in Helping Families of People with Special Needs.
- Schultz et al. (1992). Family Counseling Programs for Supporting Families of Disabled Children.