

# GUIDING AND PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

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## **Abstract**

*The transition process of high school students to university education and college life is quite challenging. Therefore, this process should not be unguided, as this research paper suggests, in order to equip the high school students with the necessary skills and background to enable them to go through this phase successfully. There should thus be a strategy or programme for the teachers and the administrative staff to be implemented in the high schools- to achieve this goal.*

*However, this research paper was conducted to first find out whether the high schools are following any strategy or programme, evaluate the current programmes if they already exist and gauge the willingness of the schools, teachers and administrative staff to be a part of such strategies and programmes. Based on the result of this study, it was found that most of the schools with their academic and non-academic staff are not actually a part of a current strategy, but yet have the willingness to participate in any well-planned and feasible one.*

*Thus, the study finally recommends that a specific strategy and programme should be formed and introduced to high schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain, mainly private schools until it is possible to access the public ones when the permission could be obtained.*

## **Keywords:**

1. *Guidance,*
  2. *Transition*
  3. *University Education*
  4. *Strategy*
  5. *Programme*
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## Chapter 1

### 1. Introduction

Our society is very important as it is the domain that we live in, so it is also our responsibility to maintain and improve the goodness of this domain in order to have a healthy society. In relation to this statement, one should understand that students are a vital part of society because they are the future builders. The care and guidance provided by parents should be in line with the guidance provided by the teachers, even though the latter may be for a longer time.

However, education and knowledge is the backbone of society and economy. It is a major reason of development and improvement of any nation. It is the responsibility of parents as well as the school teachers to guide the future children and nurture the passion of learning in them, so as to incorporate education in our culture. Similarly, high school teachers may guide and prepare students for university education so that they emphasize accountability in learning, in order to motivate students to be responsible towards their own university education. The right attitude and behavior for learning should be inculcated in the students which will in turn facilitate success in their university studies and career ahead. Consequently, this would be reflected in society and eventually on the country's economy- which may contribute to the development of the Kingdom of Bahrain especially under the Vision of 2030.

Today, there are many students who actually suffer from a lack of guidance. Hence, they deserve to be guided rather than being perceived as careless learners. However, there are some students who are actually careless, and so these students can also be directed and encouraged to accept this guidance. There are some proposed methods and strategies to guide and prepare high school students effectively, preferably before entering university. Teachers are expected to understand that a lack of guidance at high school is a real problem and could affect the future of the country. High school students are expected to respond, accept and follow the guidance provided to them.

This study basically intends to provide guidance and strategies to prepare high school students for university education, in terms of being responsible and accountable towards their process of learning.

#### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to:

1. find out whether high schools are following any current strategy or programme to guide students for successful university education.
2. evaluate the existing strategies and methods used to guide and prepare the high school students for university education.
3. identify the willingness of high schools to accept new strategies to guide and prepare students for university education.

#### 1.2 Significance of the Study

Based on the research objectives, this study aims to have a value that could contribute to the improvement of students' attitude towards their university education. It may also

improve the guidance strategies that are practiced by the high schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

In keeping with the above statement, the target audiences are specifically high schools and high school students. The high schools will benefit from this study in terms of obtaining effective and valuable strategies to guide the students. This will make their work easier and distinguished, which may also lead the school to further development. The high school students can benefit by acquiring valuable ethics and skills which in turn can have the remarkable effect of grooming them to become responsible students who are responsible and accountable for their own behavior during their university education.

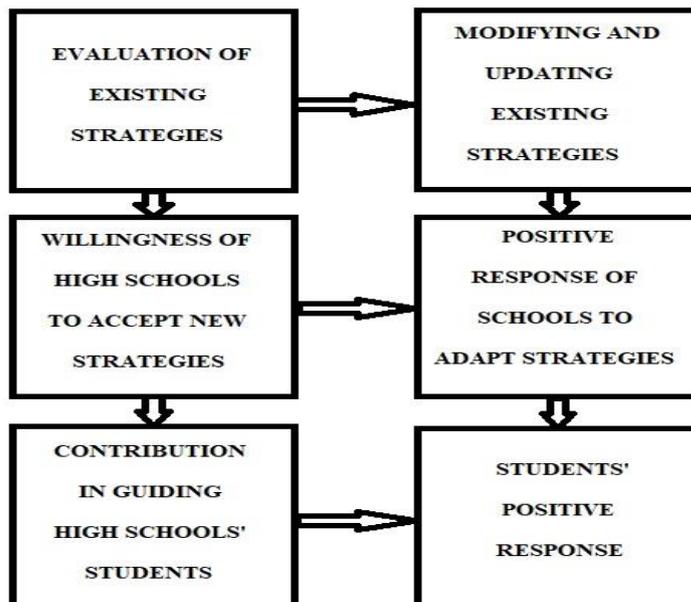
Therefore, the significance of this study is the contribution that it may provide to high schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain, especially the private ones, as well as the skills that will be obtained by the high school students to be prepared for success in their university education.

**1.3 Scope and Limitation**

The research for this study was conducted in the Kingdom of Bahrain, covering the government and private schools. The schools’ personnel were approached for data collection as well as conducting the study. The personnel approached were:- 1) High School Teachers, 2) School Administrative Staff, 3) Social Counselors and Supervisors, 4) School Principals.

The most important limitation of this study is the time factor, as schools are busy with their existing schedules and duties. Moreover, the researcher also does not have flexible time for data collection and general research process, so that also limits the number of schools to be covered. Also, to enter the government schools for such purposes there should be a prior permission from the Ministry of Education or school principals, which may cause a difficulty in the process of the research.

**1.4 Conceptual Framework / Theoretical Framework**



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework Model**

The conceptual framework in this study is a one-way model. It starts with the evaluation of the existing strategies and methods in high schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This part is directed to enhance the existing strategies or to modify and update them if required. Then, it moves on to study the willingness of high schools to accept new strategies for guiding and preparing students for university education. From that point, the concept is directed to get a positive response from the selected schools in order to adapt to new strategies for better results. There should be a valuable contribution from the schools in the process of guiding and preparing high school students where it leads them to evince a positive response. This will result in improving their attitude to be responsible and accountable for their actions-towards their university education. (Figure 1.1)

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2. Literature Review

Increasing the focus on preparation of high school students for university education and success is very important for the nation's economy and equity concerns. Lack of academic preparation is a major reason for the delay of students' graduation from university or low educational attainment [1].

Nowadays, a large number of high school students think of joining college, but only 50% who register in colleges are actually prepared for university education. Less than 40% of the working young people of the age group (25-34), obtained a university degree as the time of providing university education is over, while the existing educational system is still stuck in the past [2].

However, improving the transitional phase from high school to university is very important, because of the demographic changes throughout the nation. The ongoing inequalities in education and the aspirations of students as well as the economy of the world require higher levels of knowledge and skills than before. The benefits of such results are not only for students and parents but for every citizen in the country. The government is capable and has to help to prevent the division within the nation when it comes to schools and colleges [2].

Many studies have revealed that there is an academic gap between high school and college. Even with the development and improvements that have taken place during the past 20 years, a serious cut-off between high school and university education still exists, which makes the transition process very difficult [3].

Nevertheless, as a positive aspect, there are some efforts going on to assure the firmness in implementing the high school course work in order to improve the standards and create better arrangement between high school and university, with more effective assessments. With the initiative of the State and National support to lead the colleges and universities is a good attitude to effectuate a positive change [3].

The high school students are more likely to obtain college credits as the studies have indicated in the last ten years. It is also remarkable that the current strategies are aiding the 'low achieving' students so as to benefit from such opportunities, where it is encouraged to attend universities and make the bridge from high school to university more accessible [3].

As of today, a high school diploma is not enough to ensure a better career. Nevertheless, a lot of students do not make it successfully to university education, which affects their career. Unfortunately, the experience of the students in high school does not always prepare them well for the transition to the university level. In addition, several surveys reveal that holders of high school diploma do not fit in the criteria required by the employers. Also, these surveys show that undergraduates may lack the necessary skills for certain jobs, especially with the existence of many academic fields. Moreover, numerous students need special assistance when they enter university because of the academic gap between high school and university. So many strategies have been put into effect to help prepare high school students for university education [4].

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design:

As per the objectives of this research paper, it was designed specifically to cater to the topic of research – ‘Guiding and Preparing High School students for successful university education’. A special consideration was also made for the larger benefit for society and the country’s economic prosperity.

The qualitative and quantitative approach was utilized to conduct the research. Books and journals as well as relevant websites were used to form the foundational framework, in order to establish the concept of the research.

The descriptive methodology was used to obtain the necessary data and information for measuring the level of cooperation and willingness of high school teachers and the administrative staff - in order to guide the students for a better and smoother transition process from high school to university.

#### 3.2 Sample and Location:

The research was carried out within and in favor of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Therefore, the sample for the survey was also taken from the same country. The total number of the sample is fifty (50) respondents, and they are all teachers and administrative staff of high school-specifically grades 10, 11, and 12. These respondents were selected on the basis of two criteria: (i) those who were from the same field but were randomly chosen, and (ii) those who were from the same field but were particular employees and were deliberately chosen.

#### 3.3 Framework:

A questionnaire was constructed to collect the necessary data to answer the research questions. The survey questionnaire is consisted of two parts: one part focused on the current strategies and methods implemented, while the other part emphasized the willingness of the teachers and the administrative staff of high schools, to implement the new strategies that were relevant to the study objective.

A sample size of fifty (50) respondents was found to be adequate for this study even though the sample size is small in comparison to the actual population. As Roscoe (1975) indicated a thumb rule for determining a sample size is that, if a sample is larger than thirty (30) and less than five hundred (500) respondents, it is appropriate for most researches [5].

#### 3.4 Data Analysis:

The collected data of this study was analyzed by the software (Microsoft Excel), and was classified and illustrated in charts. It was also supported by relevant explanation. In addition to this analysis, the information was further elaborated and explained by tables that enhanced the results found through the distributed questionnaire.

## Chapter 4

### Results and Discussion

#### 4.1 Data Analysis

This part of the study presents the result of the collected data and explains it accordingly. It is intended, in chapter form, to review the result of analysis applied by MS Excel, in which one main test has been conducted to analyse the data and result, namely, Descriptive Analysis. This test has been applied accurately, based on the type of this research paper as a quantitative and partly qualitative study, in order to reach to the result and prepare the data for further discussion.

However, the role of this chapter is to present the result of the above mentioned test, in order to analyse and discuss it. The descriptive analysis applied in this research intends to show the result in relation to the research topic and therefore, either reach the desired outcome or just reach the subsequent result of the study. The analysis output is displayed and discussed to find out whether there is a possibility to apply the objectives of this study in reality, irrespective of the result.

The questionnaire of this research has been divided into two parts: (i) for the personal information of the respondents and (ii) for the practical information analysed and discussed herein. The following tables illustrate the statistical test that has been done for this study.

*Table 4.1: Gender*

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	21	42%
Female	29	58%

The above table shows that female participants were more than male participants, as the percentage shows 58% of females and 42% of males.

*Table 4.2: Job*

Job	Number	Percentage
Teacher	37	74%
Admin. Staff	13	26%

In the table above the result shows that 37 or 74% out of 50 participants are teachers, while 13 participants or 26% are administrative staff.

*Table 4.3: Field*

Field	Number	Percentage
Education	13	26%
Language & Science	27	54%
Social Studies	4	8%
Others	6	12%

In relation to the field of the respondents in table 4.3, 13 participants out of 50, that is 26%, are specialized in Education. In the fields of language and science the number is 27, being

54% of all the participants, while only 4 or 8% of them are specialized in Social Studies. Lastly, participants from other fields are 6 out of 50 respondents being 12% of the total number.

*Table 4.4: Years of Experience*

Years of Experience	Number	Percentage
1-5	12	24%
5-10	22	44%
10-15	5	10%
15-20	7	14%
20 and Above	4	8%

In the last table of part I, which is about the respondents' years of experience in their respective fields, the result shows that 12 participants have 1-5 years of experience which is 24%, and 22 participants have experience of 5-10 years which is 44% of all. Participants with 10-15 years of experience are only 5 people, so they are 10% out of the 50 respondents, whereas in the category of 15-20 years of experience there are 7 participants. Moreover, the participants with an experience of 20 years and above are only 4, being 8% of the total number.

*Table 4.5: Do you practice or are you involved in any strategy/programme that addresses preparing high school students for university education?*

Answer	Number	Percentage
Yes	11	22%
No	39	78%

In relation to the practical information, the table above shows that 78% of the respondents- which is the majority as they are 39 out of 50 participants, are not involved in any strategy or programme that aims at guiding or preparing high school students for successful university education. It also shows that, there are only 11 participants who are involved in such programmes, which is 22% of the sample number.

*Table 4.6: Answer one of the following questions based on the answer of question number 1.*

*A. If yes, is it a continuous programme or is it an occasional one?*

Answer	Number	Percentage
Continuous	4	36.36%
Occasional	7	63.63%

The table above demonstrates that the respondents who responded with 'yes' are also divided into two groups: (i) those who are involved in continuous programmes comprising of 36.36% of the total participants as they are only 4 and, (ii) those who are involved in occasional programmes, consisting of 63.63% of these respondents.

*B. If no, is there any proposed strategy/programme addressing the same by your school?*

Answer	Number	Percentage
Yes	11	28.20%
No	28	71.79%

The above table shows the responses of the participants who responded with ‘No’. They are also divided into two groups: (i) the ones who responded with ‘Yes’ are 11 out of 39 that is 28.20% and, (ii) those who responded with ‘No’ are 28 out of 39 respondents or 71.79%, in response to the fact that their respective schools are proposing any relevant strategy/programme.

**Table 4.7:** *Are you willing to be involved in any modified/amended/new strategy or programme that will help students pursue their higher education?*

Response	Number	Percentage
Agree	41	82%
Disagree	8	16%
Neutral	1	2%

This table shows the response of the participants to the above question as to whether they are willing to be part of a strategy/programme that is related to guiding or preparing high school students for successful university education. The participants who responded positively were 41 out of 50 that is 82%, while 8 that is 16% responded negatively and only one respondent, that is 2% of all was neutral.

**Table 4.8:** *Are you willing to participate/organize/support activities related to a programme that will help students to succeed in their university education?*

Response	Number	Percentage
Agree	41	82%
Disagree	8	16%
Neutral	1	2%

The above table illustrates the result that shows whether the respondents are willing to take an active part in activities or programmes that are organized to guide or prepare high school students to successful university education. 41 respondents that is 82% agreed. 8 that is 16% disagreed, and only 1 that is 2% of all the 50 respondents was neutral. Thus, the result here is identical to the one in table 4.7.

**Table 4.9:** *Such programmes will be helpful to high school students in order to guide/prepare them for successful university education.*

Response	Number	Percentage
Agree	45	90%
Disagree	4	8%
Neutral	1	2%

The last but not the least, the above table shows whether the respondents actually value such strategies or programmes, that are set in order to guide/prepare high school students for successful university education. 45 participants that is 90% of the 50 agreed with the statement above. However, there were 4 participants, that is 8% who disagreed. Only one respondent that is 2% of the total number had a neutral response.

## Chapter 5

### Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Findings

The final finding of this study based on the result of the questionnaire and the statement of problem, has three aspects:

- I. Respondents who are involved in strategies and programmes related to guiding high school students for successful university education are less in number when compared to those who are not. This finding is supportive of the literature study number [2]. The previous study, as well as the current one, indicates that some schools actually put more efforts and work hard towards improving the academic standards and output, hence the participants were involved.
- II. Respondents who are not involved in strategies and programmes related to guiding high school students for successful university education are higher in number compared to those who are involved. This finding is supportive of the literature study number [2], as they both indicate that there is a need to increase the effort in achieving such academic targets.
- III. Respondents who are willing to be involved in strategies and programmes related to guiding high school students for successful university education indicate remarkable contribution. This finding is supportive of the literature study number [1] & [4]. These studies, including the current research paper, indicate that there is a lack of preparation and guidance for high school students to facilitate their successful transition from school to university education. Therefore, there is a need to implement a strategy or programme in order to achieve such goals. This study will be effective only if this finding is taken into consideration.

#### 5.2 Conclusions

Based on the finding of the study the following conclusions are made:

- I. It is good that all the teachers and administrative staff that have been surveyed are qualified and fit for their jobs. It shows that the schools are actually paying attention to the fact that people who work for schools should be educated for such an academic environment. Knowing that the schools' boards and managements are careful about such matters also indicates how serious they are about the future of the students. This part of the conclusion is in line with the statement of the problem part (I).
- II. In this aspect, it was found that the schools or teachers and staff who are involved are less than the ones who are not. However, this is not necessarily negative, because the response to the question which is related to the willingness of teachers and administrative employees was more positive than negative. In line with the aforesaid statement, teachers and staff members who are involved in programmes or strategies that are related to guiding and preparing high school students for successful university education are lower in number, according to the result of the questionnaire. This part of the conclusion is in line with the statement of the problem part (II).
- III. Therefore, the result of this research paper is considered positive to a certain extent. The only thing is that the objective should be applied and implemented on private high

schools in Bahrain to begin with. Hopefully this could be applicable on public high schools as well. This part of the conclusion is in line with the statement of the problem part (III).

### **5.3 Recommendations:**

Based on the above conclusions, the following are hereby recommended:

- I. The participants who are not involved in strategies and programmes aiming to guide students for successful university education are recommended to participate in such programmes to contribute to achieving such objectives.
- II. On the other hand, the respondents who are already involved, could possibly help in introducing such strategies and programmes to their counterparts in other high schools, in order to spread this kind of awareness and programme to lay the ground for high school students, to succeed at the university level.
- III. In relation to the conclusion of part (III), as much as it is believed that the objective of this research is valuable, it is not possible for it to be useful, unless there is a complete proposed strategy or programme to be implemented in high schools in the near future. Thus, the next step after this research, is to start making such a strategy or programme within a reasonable period of time.

## References

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**Research Questionnaire**

This is a questionnaire of an official research conducted by a faculty member of the Center for General Education of AMA international University Bahrain, titled as ‘**Guiding and Preparing High School Students for Successful University Education**’. If you receive this document that means you’re purposely chosen, for this questionnaire is specifically targeting professional people working in high schools.

I hereby request you to kindly complete this questionnaire which is supposed to take not more than five minutes, in order to collect the necessary information and achieve the purpose of this study.

I appreciate your kind cooperation and look forward to having your suggestions in the specified box at the end of this document. Thank you.

**I. Respondents’ Personal Information:**

1. Gender:
  - A. Male
  - B. Female
2. Job:
  - A. Teacher
  - B. Admin. Staff
3. Field:
  - A. Education
  - B. Language C. Science
  - C. Social Studies
  - D. Others .....
4. Years of Experience
  - A. 1-5
  - B. 5-10
  - C. 10-15
  - D. 15-20
  - E. 20 and Above

**II. Practical Information:**

1. Do you practice or are you involved in any strategy/programme that addresses preparing high school students for university education?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No
2. Answer one of the following questions based on the answer of question number 1.
  - i. If yes, is it a continuous programme or is it occasional one?
    - A. Continuous
    - B. Occasional
  - ii. If no, is there any proposed strategy/programme addressing the same by your school?
    - A. Yes
    - B. No

3. Are you willing to be involved in any modified/amended/new strategy or programme that will help students pursue their higher education?
  - A. Agree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Neutral
4. Are you willing to participate/organize/support activities related to a programme that will help students to succeed in their university education?
  - A. Agree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Neutral
5. Such programmes will be helpful to high school students in order to guide/prepare them for successful university education.
  - A. Agree
  - B. Disagree
  - C. Neutral