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**A RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATIONAL
COUNSELING NEEDS AND GUIDANCE OF
SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS**

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A Research on the Educational Counseling Needs and Guidance of Secondary Schools Students

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Abstract – Young people need counseling and guidance to be able to discover abilities, inclinations and to outline their future. Career guidance and counseling should be made permanent from primary and secondary education. With a permanent reformed educational system that does not value counseling and vocational guidance of scholars, Indian educational system has a major minus. But the insufficiency of counselors in the school education, determines the high rate of disorientation of the potential students in choosing the faculty that they want to graduate from, or worse, determines school dropout.

The present investigation was directed towards the identification of counseling needs of the secondary school students as perceived by secondary school teachers by normative survey method. For this, a Counseling Needs inventory was constructed by the investigator. Results of the analysis indicate that secondary school students have strong counseling needs, as perceived by their teachers. Results also show that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher perception on the counseling needs of secondary school students.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of any education system is not only to foster academic learning but also all round development of children. Besides cognitive development, schooling also involves appropriate socio-affective development (i.e., self-reliance, self-discipline, taking initiative, independence of thought, understanding relationships with people and environment, responsible action, etc.). Development of such personal-social qualities includes knowledge and understanding, abilities and skills in relation to oneself and others. The school, besides the family, is a major influence in children's personal-social development. As students' progress through primary and secondary stages of schooling, they need an environment that is secure, warm, caring and nurturing. Teachers in order to foster personal-social competence need to develop an understanding of their students and ensure that all students are treated fairly, are valued, and are exposed to a wide range of personal and social learning experiences.

Education aims at promoting optimum development of students in all spheres – educational, vocational, personal, social, moral, physical etc. so as to make them productive and useful citizens. Guidance and counseling in harmony with the goals of education, aims to facilitate maximum personal development of children in all spheres of life. In its attempt to meet the

needs of all students, guidance and counseling makes education a meaningful and satisfying experience. Learning and understanding about self is as important as learning about various school subjects. Every child has the potential to develop self-understanding which includes understanding of abilities, interests, behaviour, attitudes, values, conflicts, anxieties, likes, dislikes, impulses / emotions, goals, one's role in society etc. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) views Guidance and counseling as part of curriculum. In this view guidance and counseling functions can be carried out through the curriculum by integrating guidance philosophy and practices through curricular offerings thereby adopting a proactive and preventive approach. Educational, career and personal-social development of children can be promoted by creating stress-free environment for learning, encouraging students to understand themselves, relating subject matter to self and needs of students, helping

children learn independently and cope with demands and challenges, facilitate development of healthy peer relationships through group activities and classroom climate, etc.

The need for guidance and counseling for students emerges from the changes taking place in every sphere of life. Academic stress, poor academic performance, cut-throat competition, vast and varied

educational and career opportunities and resulting confusion in making career choice, ever growing, changing and complex world of work, drop-out, suicide, anger, violence, drug abuse, child abuse, sex abuse, HIV/AIDs, crime, changes in lifestyle, divorced / single parents etc. are some of the concerns which require support of guidance and counseling services to school students. Helpline for students by various organizations like CBSE, few State level guidance agencies, NGOs etc. and popularity of these helplines point towards the need and significance of guidance and counseling requirement for the school system.

Careers guidance is a process that aims to provide individuals a clearer understanding of themselves and their potential for future career development. Particularly careers guidance helps people to:

- Clarify their goals for the future;
- Assess their career development needs at different points in their life;
- To understand the actual process of choosing a career;
- Take appropriate measures to implement these objectives.

The main purpose of guidance is to assist individuals in the exploration of their complex needs, "to make greater sense of their current situation and to build confidence in their ability to complete the review process and move forward from the point at which they seek help".

A. G. Watts presents careers guidance as operating "at the interface between the individual and society, between self and opportunity, between aspiration and realism. It facilitates the allocation of life chances. Within a society in which such life chances are unequally distributed, it faces the issue of whether it serves to reinforce such inequalities or to reduce them".

Career counseling includes all counseling activities related to career choice on a lifetime. In the career counseling process, all matters regarding the individual needs (including work, family and personal preoccupations), are recognized as an integral part of career decision making and planning. Career counseling includes also activities related to the inadequacy of employment, mental health issues, stress reduction and development programs that improve work skills, interpersonal relations, flexibility, adaptability, and other development programs leading to self-agent.

With the introduction of the new national policy on education in 1977, guidance and counseling became an important issue in our schools system. Since then, guidance and counseling has been a regular topic in our dailies conferences and seminars. For example,

Nnadi (1984). Stressed its importance in our educational system and the priority that should be given to it in our schools because of its usefulness in transition in the various stages of education. Also, Nwabuisi (1984), emphasized on the necessity of proper guidance programme in schools if the current national policy on education is to have the desired impact.

Perhaps, Durojaiye's (1972), Stand on the issue of guidance and counseling in our schools was one of the factors that influenced the formulation of the aspect of the new national policy on education that deals with guidance programme in schools today. Taking into consideration, our rapid educational and economic growth, he emphasized on the need for guidance and counseling in our educational policy. In his words; "We can see that the need for guidance and counseling in Nigeria becomes increasingly pressing as economic and educational strides are being made in the country. Each student needs to be helped to strengthen his abilities to make nice choices and to face problems encountered in society. Those who fall by the way side because of physical, intellectual or emotional inadequacy particularly need guidance"(p.72).

In the above statement, Durojaiye points out clearly the fact that guidance and counseling is very important in our schools as it helps students to face the challenges of life and be useful to themselves and the society in which they live.

School counseling programs in Tennessee have always played an important role in the total educational process for our children and youth. School counselors work with students, families, communities, faculties and staff addressing the issues that have a substantial impact on student academic, personal/social and career development. Wherever counselors serve, be it in rural, urban or suburban areas, they strive to meet the needs of all students.

There is a general belief that our public schools are at a critical point and that priorities must change if our schools are to provide the education that will enable our youth to function successfully in our complex society. Across the nation, school counselors are responding to the challenges and expectations by changing traditional position-centered (counselor-centered) services to data-driven, student-centered services.

The Tennessee Model for Comprehensive School Counseling represents what a school counseling program should contain and serves as an organizational tool to identify and prioritize the elements necessary for program implementation. Such programs are vital to the school improvement process. School counselors work strategically as part of an instructional team to promote student success. They are specially trained educators in a position to call attention to situations within our schools that impact student learning. Serving as leaders and advocates,

school counselors work collaboratively to provide services in a proactive, developmental and preventative manner.

A need is any lack or deficit of something within an individual, either acquired or physiological, whose fulfilment would tend to promote the welfare of the individual. Counseling needs are needs of a student that are required to resolve his/her problems which he/she confronts in day to day life situations and also to enrich his personal development. Every human being has a strong desire to achieve some goals. The satisfaction of the achievement need leads a person to further activity. So this need is a motivating force which can be used properly for making teaching learning process effective. Children with growing intellectual capacities find a great interest in acquiring new knowledge. The spontaneous urge for knowledge should be properly guided. Adolescent students have a strong desire to do things independently. So they start thinking about their future career. They need vocational guidance. Need for belongingness is one of the most basic psychological needs. This includes need to have friends, to be loved and accepted by other people, need for affiliation and to belong to a network of social relations. In every individual, there will be a longing for recognition or approval. During the period of childhood and adolescence the longing for recognition is very high. Freedom is an important need which has to be satisfied. Needs to get freedom, to resist restriction, to express feelings freely and to get freedom of choice are also important needs at this stage. Every individual wants to be more secure. The security need includes the need for economic and social security. Emotional handicap is a condition which results in improper behaviour that interferes with the individual's ability to learn and function under normal circumstances. Problems resulted from emotional handicaps are anxiety, depression, learning disability and sense of inferiority. Students at this stage have a tendency to deviate from the accepted ways and patterns of society and not to conform to the expectations of society to which he belongs. Such deviant behaviour is detrimental to the welfare of himself/herself, his/her family and society. It leads to several behaviour problems including stealing, lying, drug addiction, truancy, aggression, abnormal outburst of temper, sexual harassment and bullying.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING: INDIAN SCENARIO

In attempts towards strengthening guidance and counselling services in the country, a historical summation is imperative. A view of guidance and counselling is provided as articulated in various policy documents, advances in establishment of guidance and counselling services across the states, existing status, locale, structure, functions and approach to offering guidance and counselling services.

A Policy Perspective - A relook at guidance and counselling, as emphasized in various policies/curriculum frameworks, indicates that concern for providing guidance and counselling services in schools for school students has continued throughout the years after independence. The provision of guidance services by trained personnel or counsellors, or teachers and training of teachers for the purpose has also been emphasised. A number of Education Commissions and Curriculum Frameworks have laid special emphasis on guidance and counselling in school education. A brief look at the recommendations is mandated to augment efforts in this direction.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) of Education, the first Education Commission in independent India also known as Mudaliar Commission, recognized the importance of proper guidance for students as part of education. The specific recommendations included: (i) establishment of centres in different regions of the country for training of guidance officers and career masters, and (ii) Central Research Organization for carrying out research in educational and vocational guidance. As an outcome of the recommendations of the Commission Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance (CBEVG), a Central agency, was set up in 1954 under Ministry of Education and several such bureaus at state level also. Establishment of All India Educational and Vocational Guidance Association in 1956 was a result of this. This gave impetus to the idea of providing guidance services in the country in an organized manner.

Education Commission (1964-66) expanded the scope of guidance services beyond educational and vocational guidance. Guidance was viewed as both adjective and developmental; therefore it was regarded as an integral part of education and not a special psychological or social service peripheral to educational purpose. Guidance, therefore, was seen as a continuous process aimed at assisting the individual to make decisions and adjustments from time to time. A detailed framework of guidance services describing the functions and strategies of guidance at primary and secondary school stages as well as training of guidance functionaries was given. It recommended guidance at the Primary Stage "to begin from the lowest class of the primary school to help pupils make satisfactory transition from home to school; to diagnose difficulties in the learning; identify pupils in need of special education (e.g., the gifted, the backward,

the physically handicapped); and to guide pupils to develop insight into the world of work and favourable attitudes towards work". Guidance at the Secondary Stage aimed at identification and development of the abilities and interests of adolescent pupils. The emphasis was laid on trained counsellor to provide

guidance services in all secondary schools. However, it also recommended adopting a short-range programme consisting of (i) A minimum guidance programme for all secondary schools through a visiting school counsellor assisted by the school teachers in the simpler guidance functions; (ii) Comprehensive guidance programme in selected schools (one in each district) to serve as models; (iii) Provision of necessary supervisory staff in the State Bureaus of Guidance to inspect and offer consultation to the school workers; and (iv) All secondary school teachers to be introduced to guidance concepts through pre- or inservice training.

National Policy of Education (NPE, 1986) and Programme of Action linked guidance services with the vocationalization of education and the POA (1992) stated emphatically the need for a parallel infrastructure of guidance and counselling: “the centrally sponsored scheme envisages that vocational guidance will be available in the school for providing necessary guidance to the students, parents and teachers regarding suitable educational and vocational choices. The guidance programme should be directed at informing the students about job opportunities in various courses, facilities for on-the-job training and placement by working in collaboration with employees”. The policy also recommended responsibility of Vocational Guidance Teachers for general foundation course and appointment of trained counsellor at district level (at state’s cost) to organize career advise centre and existing bureaus to train teachers. Later the revised scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education (VOSE) (1993) suggested that Vocational Guidance Teacher (VGT) be appointed in each school for the purpose.

National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE, 2000) mentioned guidance services mainly for providing assistance to students for choice of courses and selection of a suitable career required at school leaving stage and not as an intervention to facilitate holistic development throughout the school years. Accordingly, NCFSE laid stress on provision of a guidance counsellor for every higher secondary school and one visiting school counsellor for a cluster of 3 to 4 secondary schools. In addition, it also laid stress on providing a career teacher for each secondary school wherever counsellor could not be appointed.

National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) provided guidelines for facilitating healthy growth and development of students across all school stages and scope for guidance / counselling at each of these school stages from elementary through secondary and higher secondary stages. Recognizing the elementary school years as one of tremendous cognitive and affective development, NCF advocates the teacher’s guidance approach : “Teachers with background in guidance and counselling can design and lead activities to meet the developmental needs of children, thus laying the foundation for necessary attitudes and

perceptions towards self and the world of work. They can also provide needed support and guidance to children belonging to various groups and strata of society for their sustenance through the elementary school areas”. At secondary stage NCF states : “The courses at this level generally aim at creating an awareness of the various disciplines and introduces students to the possibilities and scope of study in them. Through such engagement, they also discover their own interests and aptitudes and begin to form ideas on what courses of study and related work they might like to pursue later. Such needs could be effectively met by Guidance and Counselling interventions of an organized nature with support of trained teachers and professional counsellors”.

The Participation of the school counselor

School counselors provide mental, emotional, social, developmental and behavioral services to students. The three domains of responsibility of the school counselor are categorized as: academic, career, and personal/social. Effective counseling programs are important to the school climate and a crucial element in improving student achievement.

School counselors are trained professionals, licensed or certified by law and/or regulation in all 50 states. School counselors are required to obtain graduate education in counseling as an entry-level prerequisite for state licensing. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing notes that the complex needs of today’s pupils emphasize the need for comprehensive counseling and guidance programs in schools. The foundation of the school counseling profession contains knowledge and professional attitudes that promote student development, learning and achievement. School counselors must have knowledge of the laws and ethics of counseling specific to children in California schools. Effective school counseling is further supported by knowledge of state and national standards for school counseling and by familiarity with models of effective comprehensive school counseling and guidance programs.

In many cases, there is a lack of understanding about how the work of school counselors impacts student outcomes. Historically, school counselors were trained under the mental health provider model with an emphasis on 1:1 counseling. This trend is changing as counselors are gaining the necessary training to expand their services to provide a broader impact on students’ academic, career as well as personal and social domains.

Services provided by school counselors may include the following:

- Academic skill development
- Violence prevention initiatives (e.g. Second Step, Peace Builders)

- Group counseling
- Peer counseling
- Individual counseling
- Career development
- Academic course selection and scheduling
- College planning assistance

It has been suggested that the role of school counselors must continue to evolve and develop if it is to remain a critical component of a school's focus on student achievement. For example, one author suggests, "Many counseling programs are still operating under a student services model.

The focus of counselors' work is related to career planning and placement, problem solving, and class scheduling. Under this model, counselors are spending the majority of their time providing services to a small number of students who have the greatest needs. They are providing individual counseling services to the most needy students and are reacting to crisis situations as they arise.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

One of the aims of guidance and counselling is to facilitate development of an integrated and well-adjusted individual. As children grow and develop physically, they also develop emotions, cognition, language, morals and values. They learn about social and cultural norms, expressions and interactions in different social milieu (such as family, community, school, etc.). Development of children during the early years from birth to adolescence is rapid and takes place in all spheres: physical, cognitive, social and emotional, i.e. it is multi-dimensional. Interaction of a number of factors contributes to the development in children. The school along with the family plays a significant role in an individual's life during childhood years. However, as children enter school and through the beginning years of schooling, there is a major shift in them from self-centeredness towards accepting others' viewpoint and from impulsive to autonomous behaviour. As they approach adolescence (i.e., secondary stage of schooling), they become increasingly aware of the need to reflect upon and develop an understanding of the responsibility they have towards their personal self and to the society. Therefore, during the school years, it is essential for children to be encouraged to understand their own feelings, to learn appropriate and acceptable social behaviour keeping in mind others' needs and learn skills for leading a healthy and productive life. An optimal personal-social development in children is vital

for a well-adjusted and integrated individual whose germination needs to be made during the schooling years.

During the school years, irrespective of the stage of education, students encounter many problems / crises in their academic, social, emotional and personal lives. Some of these may have roots in the developmental process; some may have in the context of the students' present lives ; while some may have roots in the students' past development. In order to ensure that a student is able to successfully deal with the crises and continue with quality endeavour in her/his academic pursuit, it is crucial to identify the root problem and extending timely support through appropriate guidance and counselling (wherever required) following a life-span developmental approach (which helps to address the students' problem holistically). The role of guidance and counselling is not only to facilitate optimal developmental and academic accomplishments but also to take steps prior to any crisis occurrence as well as extend remedial inputs to the learner as well as to the school.

Keeping in view the above, developmental framework for providing guidance and counselling service is given to facilitate the planning of an effective guidance programme at school level. Guiding principles for developing the programme need to be based on the expressed needs, concerns of the students as well as aligned to the needs and demands of

the students' immediate socio-economic and political environment. The suggested framework is a prototype, is necessarily not hierarchical and may include overlapping concerns. The frame work below suggests the objective of guidance programme at primary stage (5 to 11 years), upper primary stage (11-14 years), secondary /higher secondary stage (14 to 18 years). The framework suggests the objectives at respective school stage; inputs and few strategies (given in order of academic, career and personal – social) to facilitate state level personnel to plan and develop school/context/need specific guidance and counselling programme in schools.

SCHOOL COUNSELING OUTCOMES

Legislative initiatives, including "No Child Left Behind" are leading school systems across the country to focus on accountability and specifically, student achievement. School counseling has great potential to help students achieve to high standards in the academic, career and personal/social aspects of their lives. The push to greater accountability puts pressure on administrators, teachers and counselors to be involved in the process of increasing student achievement, reducing the achievement gap,

improving school attendance and graduation rates, and ensuring adequate levels of safety within school systems. There is a need to consider the evidence that addresses the question of whether school counselors have a significant impact on students in order to guide policy decisions on the provision of quality, comprehensive school guidance programs.

Numerous studies have been undertaken to identify the outcomes of school counseling practices and their impacts on student achievement, behavior and other factors:

- A broad and comprehensive qualitative review of the K-12 school counseling outcome literature, including 50 school counseling outcome studies published between 1988 and 1995 suggested that one can cautiously conclude that a broad range of activities school counselors perform often result in positive changes for students.
- A review of 19 studies over 25 years considered whether counselor interventions with low achieving students and their parents are effective in boosting academic achievement, as measured by GPA. Summary information suggested that counseling interventions can have positive effects on academic achievement.
- A review of the school counseling outcome literature that focused specifically on classroom guidance produced a number of studies that demonstrated that comprehensive curriculums about career, academic and personal/social development can positively impact student knowledge in each of these domains.
- A large-scale research study considered whether school-counseling interventions in elementary schools with comprehensive guidance programs foster higher academic achievement test scores in students. Study results indicated that early elementary-age students who attend the same school for three or more years do better academically when there is a comprehensive program than students who attend schools without such programs.
- In a study, considered by many to be extremely well-designed, researchers examined whether the combination of curriculum-based and group-based interventions with a focus on cognitive and metacognitive skills, social skills, and self-management skills known to be related to school success would have a measurable impact on students' test scores on a standardized state achievement test. Study results showed that these small group and classroom-based school counseling interventions resulted in significant score improvements on state achievement tests.
- School counseling programs have been found to have significant influence on discipline problems. Baker and Gerler found that students who participated in a school-counseling program had significantly less inappropriate behaviors and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the program. Another study found that group counseling provided by school counselors significantly decreased participants aggressive and hostile behaviors.
- A study found that the efficacy of school counselors is influenced by the school climate. In schools with effective counseling programs, principals generally provided enthusiastic support for the programs and encouragement to the counselors. Another common element was a clear understanding between counselors and administrators as to the goals of the school counseling programs. These conditions were generally not present in failing programs.
- Research shows that school counseling interventions have a substantial impact on students' educational and personal development. Individual and small-group counseling, classroom guidance and consultation activities seem to contribute directly to students' success in the classroom and beyond, and school counselors should spend the majority of their time performing these interventions.
- A study on the effects of counseling on classroom performance found that the underachieving students who received counseling improved significantly on the Self-Rating Scale of Classroom behavior and in mathematics and language arts grades.
- Counselor-led, developmental guidance units presented in ninth grade classrooms have the potential to improve students' expressed behavior and general school attitudes, while addressing their developmental needs. A developmental, preventative guidance approach may help to assist students in coping with the overwhelming nature of the transition to high school.

Advantages of Comprehensive School Counseling in Springfield

In addition to the empirically-supported benefits, bulleted below are sample ways in which District and School-level stakeholders benefit from the

implementation of a comprehensive and developmental counseling program:

Students

- Participate in relevant curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services.
- Participate in proactive strategies and responsive interventions to minimize and eliminate educational barriers.
- Receive multiple opportunities to develop skills in the three counseling domains: academic, personal/social, and career.

Faculty

- Enjoy collaborative and positive relationships with school counselors, students, parents, and teachers.
- Receive direct support in the classroom in order to improve student achievement.

Administration

- Receive support from school counselor as a critical stakeholder and leader in the educational process.
- Gain data to inform the School Improvement Plan and strengthen school climate and student performance/achievement.
- Receive input regarding opportunities for professional development.

Parents and Guardians

- Participate in educational and informational sessions.
- Participate in ongoing communication between parent, teacher, administrators, and school counselor.
- Enjoy increased access to school and community resources.

CONCLUSION

Very few Secondary school students resort to specialized career counseling on their own initiative, outside the educational institution, so we can see the importance of career counseling conducted in education institutions and at the same time we can highlight the need to develop national policies to focus on the implementation as compulsory of these counseling and career guidance programs in schools.

The inspiration for embracing a far reaching school counseling system is to furnish instructors with the model for effectively supervising the 21st Century issues challenging scholars, families, and the augmented group. Inclusive counseling customizes reflect the stimulus for change and are the establishment to give every kid, immature, and family with the instruments vital for advancing continuing abilities to administer school and future tests. School guides press on to recognize imaginative routes of gathering those continually-modifying mandates of scholars' lives and societal updates in Springfield.

Investigate connected with the effect of school counseling has commonly posited two notable modalities. Studies have either surveyed the adequacy of specific exercises or intercessions used by guides (Poynton, 2006; Webb, 2005; Campbell & Brigman, 2005; Webb, Brigman, & Campbell, 2005; Brigman & Campbell, 2003) or the impact of school counseling or thorough school counseling arrangements have been assessed (Sink, Akos, Turnbull, & Mvududu, 2008; Stroh, 2004; Sink & Stroh, 2003; Lapan, Gysbers, & Petroski, 2001; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Nelson & Gardner, 1998).

The advancement of school counseling to where we are today could be portrayed by the philosophical movement from an immediate understudy fix model to a thorough model. The Comprehensive Developmental Guide (CDG) Program model (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000), started in the 1970's, accentuated school counseling as a key part of the instructive system, as opposed to auxiliary frameworks of backing aids. Direction curriculum, which fortified particular structured capabilities in the Academic, Profession, and Personal/Social spaces, was configured for provision to the whole person residents (McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005). The headway of school counseling proceeded when the American School Counselor Association discharged "The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Directing Programs" (ASCA, 2003, 2005). The ASCA schema was made according to the request for an increasingly principles-based framework with underpinnings in both responsibility and usage of information to drive person accomplishment.

As the calling of school counseling presses on to develop and convert to help 21st Century schools and people, specialists will press on to look painstakingly on the effect of school counseling customizes on the objectives of school change and school advocate commitments to shutting the accomplishment crevice.

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