SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPARTING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMMES FOR ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Alarming complexity of modern society poses a variety of complicated problems leading to conflicts, frustration, unhealthy rivalry etc. that result in value crisis and serious maladjustment among adolescent children. In such a complex society, the individual has to face many problems in life for a better adjustment in a social structure. Globalization processes and information technology have significantly changed the way people work. Thus the students counteract problems and situations in all walks and phases of life. The students are not mature enough to critically evaluate baffling situations are continuously faced with. They need somebody to help in the solution of problems and thus avoid tensions and conflicts. The need for guidance and counselling in modern times has increased because of the multiplicity of problems that the individuals have to face in the various domains of life. In the context of the changing socio-cultural scenario the repertoire of guidance and counselling has been increasing at an unexpected speed. In these circumstances, it is essential to help and guide the youth to worthwhile channels through the introduction of guidance and counseling services on a universal scale in our educational institutions. The purpose of this article is to provide direction for future guidance and counselling research that meets the goals of internationalizing guidance and counselling.

Key words: Educational Guidance, Vocational Guidance, Avocational Guidance, Social Guidance, Moral Guidance, Health Guidance, Crisis Counseling, Preventive Counseling and Facilitative Counseling

INTRODUCTION

In the present globalized scenario the adolescents face enormous problems. Atwater (1988) argues that the adolescent stage of life is marked by emotional development that includes mood swings, enthusiasm, tenderness, cruelty, curiosity and apathy. The students are not mature enough to critically evaluate baffling situations are continuously faced with. They need somebody to help in the solution of problems and thus avoid tensions and conflicts. The students must know their capabilities and potentialities, especially in areas that are crucial for the realisation of objectives in life. Their goals and aspirations and expectations are to be shaped accordingly. Corey (1991) holds that counselling is a service designed to help an individual to analyze himself/herself by relating his capabilities, achievements, interests and mode of adjustment. According to Ndaba (1978:11) the ultimate objective of guidance and counselling is to help the unique child to become what he is capable of becoming.

The UNESCO module on guidance and counselling (2000a) also posited that Guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors. Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad
range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions. As explained by Biswal (1996), the need for counselling services today could be due to the ever-growing complexity of the society and people have to learn how to cope with the upcoming challenges. The unprecedented expansion of educational institutions and first generation learners create a number of psychological problems that are personal, vocational and social.

Guidance and counselling plays a vital role in preventing educational, personal, social, mental emotional and other similar problems among school students. Ministry of education and principals of schools are aware of the heavy reliance placed on guidance and counselling services. These services are presented by Nwachukwu (2007) as information services, placement services, appraisal services, vocational guidance services, counselling services, referral services, evaluation, follow-up, consultancy and research services. As a vital component of any type and any level of education the absence of non utilization of these services in the present day school system has led to the unprecedented rise in the crime wave, violence among students, severe value erosion, wrong career choice, and wrong subject combination among other issues. Mutie and Ndambuki (2004) assert that counselling service is the brain and heart of the guidance programme. Thus counselling represents a part of the total process of guidance which is helping individuals, achieve the self-understanding and self-direction necessary to make the maximum adjustment in a particular environment.

In a democratic country like India every citizen has to play a pivotal role in the upliftment of the nation. Therefore, it is generally agreed that a citizen must be educated in such a way that it would develop certain desirable life skills, attitudes and values in him for manifestation of his own self as well as for the progress of the nation. It may enrich his intellectual and social skills helpful to lead a purposeful and successful life. Life skills based education helps children understand themselves, their friends and their world. Effective counseling services need to be based on a complete understanding and acceptance of students’ experiences (Mutie & Ndambuki, 2004). Therefore, all students would require counselling services in order to develop their academic, social and personal competencies. Effective counselling will enable them to deal with psychological problems they may experience and make rational decisions on how to solve or cope with the academic, social and personal challenges. It helps an individual to acquire skills and attitudes, which make him or her properly adjusted person in life situations.

Mohanty (2003) points out that the increasing educational institutions are of many kinds and vocations as well as occupations are of different types. Choice of career or vocation is an important event in the life of an individual. The selection of a wrong vocation can lead to unhappiness, discontent and ultimate failure, because the occupation that the person follows is not merely a means of earning a livelihood. So the vocational choice is an important event in one’s academic and career pursuit. The career guidance is provided by the consultants so that an individual can easily select an appropriate occupation or education which goes well with their capabilities, skills and interest. The Paris 2001 International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) Declaration on Educational and Vocational Guidance declared “guidance and counselling services to be essential in meeting personal, social and economic development needs and to encourage further
sustainable development in a knowledge based society”. The Paris 2001 IAEVG Declaration on Educational and Vocational Guidance also affirmed the importance of research by asserting “the effectiveness of guidance services should be monitored through regular evaluation and relevant research studies” (Van Esbroeck, 2002, p. 79).

Since studies conducted in other countries have been successful in identifying student counselling needs, there is reason to believe that similar studies in India will also yield significant results. The purpose of this article is to provide direction for future guidance and counselling research that meets the goals of internationalizing guidance and counselling. In this article, we undertake to elucidate some of these basic assumptions, and then discuss their application to the specific issue of the school-counselling programmes. The assumptions adopted in this article speak to the nature of guidance and counselling interventions as well as the research processes used to study them.

THE RATIONALE FOR INTRODUCING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

The school guidance and counselling programme developed as a result of local, national and international conditions as well as advances in technology, which were confusing and threatening to individuals. The concern for the worth and dignity of each individual as well as the need for his best productive efforts formed the bases for guidance in the school (Mortensen and Schmuller 1959:v). Indiscipline is a severe problem in our present educational system. There are many social problems that teenagers go through. Consuming drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, continue to be a serious problem for these children. Despite National efforts to eradicate these problems, many students still find their way to these mind altering chemicals. Ndondo (2004), points out that some students engage in antisocial behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse and irresponsible sexual behaviour, which leads to decline of moral integrity, because they lack knowledge on how to effectively spend and manage their leisure time.

Examination anxiety among students and poor conflict resolution also contribute to student disturbances (Biswalo 1996). Selecting an appropriate career is a critical task that faces all adolescents in all societies. The selection of a career made during the senior year is among the most critical decisions in a person's lifetime. The wrong choice of an occupation not only brings frustration for the growing adult, but a waste of energy, money and precious time. Through a well planned guidance and counselling programme, the substance abuse can be controlled among these students. The rationale for introducing guidance and counselling services at schools was to provide personal contact and help for a pupil in his development.

According to Shertz and Stone (1981) the following factors necessitated the provision of specialised school guidance and counselling service:

- Changes in the structure of society.
- Pregnancies of unmarried teenagers.
- Early marriages.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- The escalation of juvenile delinquency.
- Lack of knowledge concerning the use of leisure time.
- Pressure on traditional values and norms.
The high dropout rate in schools.
Youth unemployment.
School violence and vandalism.
The inability of individuals to make a realistic career choice.
Lack of knowledge regarding the principles of differentiated education.

In addition career awareness programmes were initiated as an integral part of the curriculum to ensure an appreciation of the dignity of work. Through the guidance programme it was envisaged that pupils would be afforded opportunities for exploring a variety of career clusters (Gibson and Mitchell 1990:14).

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

A well-organized programme of guidance services is very essential for the maximum development of the students. Following are some of the important benefits of such a programme:

- It is possible to determine the needs of the students more accurately.
- It makes it possible to put proper persons at the proper place, in the proper manner and at the proper time.
- To cultivate essential life skills in students.
- Maximum use of resources both human and material.
- To enable the students to make proper choices at various stages of their educational career.
- To minimize the mismatching between education and employment and help in the efficient use of man power.
- To understand the individual responsibilities and to adapt themselves with their environment and make them to become an efficient citizen of the society and nation.
- To minimize the incidence of indiscipline and anti-social activities.
- To help students make the best possible adjustments to the situations in the school as in the home.
- To check wastage and stagnation.
- To ensure the proper use of leisure time and motivate them to develop creative hobbies.
- To develop all aspects of personality of the students.
- To equip students in understanding the variety, depth, and breadth of personal experiences, the opportunities available, and the choices open to them by helping them recognize, strengths and facilitate, interpret, and act upon their personal resources.

Guidance and counselling aim at orienting individuals to face the ever-changing challenges in today's fast-moving technological world. The guidance researcher has to visualize the needs of future generations in facing these unknown realities and suggest ways and methods of developing built-in resources for this purpose. The world of work is changing fast and much more research is required to help the traditional worker to switch over to new technological gadgets and learn to be independent of others.

Major Areas of Guidance (Types of guidance)
The student life is getting complex day by day. Help is needed for optimum achievement and adequate adjustment in these varied life situations. The areas of guidance are very vast. The following are some of the important areas of guidance.

- **Educational Guidance:** If one closely examines the problems of young pupils in schools and colleges, one would exactly realize the need of educational guidance. Educational problems head the needs of student’s problems. Educational guidance is related to every aspect of education school/colleges, the curriculum, the methods of instruction, other curricular activities, disciplines etc.

- **Vocational Guidance:** You know that bread and butter aims are one of the main aims of education. Due to advancement in science and technology and consequent charges in industry and occupations have been emerged. There are thousands of specialized jobs/occupations in this globalized scenario. Vocational guidance is a process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter upon it and progress in it. It is concerned primarily with helping individuals make decisions and choices involved in planning a future and building a career.

- **Avocational Guidance:** The individual student spends only a small portion of his time (i.e. 4 to 6 hours per day) in school. The rest of the time needs to be effectively managed and utilized by the child for his/her progress and development. Avocational guidance helps the child to judiciously utilize the leisure time. Some interpretations may arise among the readers or teacher practitioners while they deal with the term avocation guidance. It becomes avocational when the leisurely practised vocation becomes a means of livelihood, a trade or an industry. This is the educational implication of avocation guidance other than that of the leisurely vocation.

- **Social Guidance:** School/educational institution is a miniature society and pupil from different socio-economic status, linguistic and socio-cultural background reach there. Students some time may face problems in adjustment and social relationship. It is very important that the students are to be helped in acquiring the feeling of security and they must be accepted by the group in developing social relationship and in becoming tolerant towards others. Religious maturity, National Integration, International understanding, secularism, Democracy, Political responsibility, Empathy, Sympathy etc. can be built up through social guidance. Social guidance will help the students to attain intellectual and personality development through pragmatic opportunities provided to them.

- **Moral Guidance:** Moral values occupy an important place in our life. Sometimes due to influence of diverse factors students tell lies and indulge in undesirable practices. Moral guidance helps in bringing these students in to proper track and helps their all-round development. The value system developed by the adolescent students will occur as a lifelong ethical code and it will be a base platform for their social as well as cultural development. The philosophical and ideological thinking will strengthen the self confidence and individuality of the students at this critical age of intellectual and social development. The peer group formation at this age level is clearly on the basis of their moral development. Hence they will be provided with socially desirable and culturally valuable moral support, proper guidance and counselling at any cost.
• **Health Guidance:** Health is regarded as the wealth. Total health i.e. preventive and curative is the goal of health guidance. The health guidance may be a cooperative effort of Principal, Doctors, Counsellor/psychologist, Teachers, Students and parents. For promoting preventive care the conditions of school hostel, canteen needs to be checked. Similarly health education through formal classes and information is essential in school education stages. In the present day the concern of health guidance also pertains to guidance in HIV/AIDs. Habits of cleanliness, Healthy food habits, awareness on nutrition, prevention of communicable diseases, measures and practices for the prevention of pollution, maintenance of body fitness, importance of physical exercises etc. should be practiced compulsorily at this age level.

**Major Areas of Counselling**

• **Crisis Counseling:** Crisis Counseling focus on single or recurrent problems that is overwhelming or traumatic. If a trauma or crisis is not resolved in a healthy manner, the experience can lead to more lasting psychological, social and medical problems. Crisis counseling provides education, guidance and support. Crisis counseling is not a substitute for individuals who need long term psychiatric care. Crisis counselor can help people face and move past distressing and traumatic events in their lives.

• **Preventive Counseling:** The search for efficacious interventions to prevent psychological disturbance, physical ailments, and human distress has produced major initiatives and discoveries in the 20th century. The mental hygiene and vocational guidance movements early in the century, the discovery of polio vaccines at midcentury, and programs to prevent drug and alcohol use and social violence in more recent years represent major attempts to reduce emotional and physical distress through prevention.

• **Facilitative Counseling:** Facilitative Counseling help students to correct mistakes and solve problems and plan for their future. It is used primarily to help the client deal with negative feelings that arise during implementation of plans. For most clients this stage is uncharted territory and can be quite stressful and threatening.

**SCHOOL COUNSELING AROUND THE WORLD**

The factors leading to the development of guidance and counseling in the United States began in the 1890s with the social reform movement. Guidance and counseling in these early years were considered to be mostly vocational in nature, but as the profession advanced other personal concerns became part of the school counselor’s agenda. Vocational guidance was spreading throughout the country, so that by 1918 more than 900 high schools had some type of vocational guidance system. Early vocational guidance counselors were often teachers appointed to assume the extra duties of the position in addition to their regular teaching responsibilities. The 1920s and 1930s saw an expansion of counseling roles beyond working only with vocational concerns. Social, personal, and educational aspects of a student’s life also needed attention.

From America, the movement spread to other countries of the world including Britain, Japan, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Thailand etc. In most of these countries, adequate guidance services are available in nearly every major town. It is clear that school counseling has made significant progress in the United States. Political, social, and cultural factors are deeply embedded in the way a given country addresses the educational needs of its population. In Britain, guidance centres and counselling clinics have been doing useful work.
and guidance services are undergoing a rapid process of improvement, refinement and expansion. In Japan, the goal of high school counselling is to “help every student develop abilities of self-understanding, decision-making, life planning and action-taking to be able to adjust in the career options he or she decides to pursue”. In France, secondary school counselling was started in 1922 and by the late 1930s was adopted by the educational system and seen as a necessary part of the institution. School counselors assist students with vocational guidance.

In Thailand, school counselling often incorporates advice-giving by teachers. In Israel, school counselors devote one-third of their time to classroom instruction and the rest to personal and social counseling. Career counselling is somewhat curtailed because students are required to enlist with the armed services after high school. In Hong Kong, school counselling and guidance is becoming more of a service that is incorporated into the whole school with an emphasis on prevention. Turkey has a fifty-year history of counselling development. There is a professional association that publishes a journal and sponsors conferences. Many secondary schools have counseling services and receive support from the Ministry of National Education.

**Guidance and Counselling in India**

As far as India is concerned, the techniques of guidance—informal and incidental—can be traced far back to ancient times. The Panchathantra and Janaka tales are well known for their moral stories, parables, and question-answer techniques in learning. Even before the time of Socrates, these were used in India. The teacher-taught relationship was that of Guru-Shishya—the word Guru meaning the ‘one who guides’.

Guidance as an organized professional activity, is more than four decades old in the country. In India, guidance movement started as an academic discipline. Calcutta university enjoys the privilege of being the first Indian university to introduce guidance as a section of its department of Applied Psychology in 1938 to conduct research in the field of educational and vocational guidance. Guidance is not confined to the vocational field only. It covers the whole gamut of youth problems and should be provided in an appropriate form at all stages of education through the co-operative endeavour of understanding parents, headmasters, principals and guidance officers.

The Govt of India established the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance at Delhi in 1954 to give technical advice and help in organisation of the guidance movement. It also offered assistance to the State Governments to establish their own State Bureaus and to provide guidance services in their secondary schools. With the setting up of the All India Educational and Vocational Guidance Association in 1956, the guidance movement assumed an all India character.

Soon private agencies and universities started interest in the field and the Journal of Educational and Vocational Guidance was started by a private agency in 1954. Some universities also began to offer courses in guidance as optional papers for Master’s degree in Education and Psychology. The Education Commission (1964-66) considered that the Guidance services have a much wider scope and function than merely that of assisting students in making educational and vocational choices. The aims of guidance services are both adjustive and developmental; it helps the student in making the best possible adjustments to the situations in the educational institution and in the home and at the same time facilitates the development of all aspects of his personality.
At present two major establishments, Government organisations and private agencies, are providing guidance and counselling programmes for school going children. The Government agencies include the Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education, National Council for Educational Research and Training, State Bureaus of Guidance and the units of National Employment Service. There are many private agencies also actively engage in guidance and counselling programmes in various states.

Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Women and Child Development implemented a centrally sponsored scheme (ICDS) in 2000 for adolescent girls aim at breaking the inter-generational life cycle of nutritional and gender disadvantage and providing a supportive environment for self development. As part of the Adolescent Girls(AG) scheme, the state government and Union Territories of India implemented a AG scheme named Kishori Shakti Yogana (KSY) as a component of ICDS scheme. The scheme targets adolescent girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years. The state government have been given freedom to choose any combination of options and prepare a plan of action for KSY for each year subject to the condition issued by Government of India in this regard.

Increased acceptance by the general public, State boards of Education contributing services in professional counselling. Public need for counselling has developed as a result of increasing personal and social stress on our society such as drug and alcohol addiction, teenage suicides and pregnancy, child abuse, value degradation, depression, unemployment etc. So it is the time to evolve a clear national policy for introducing guidance and counselling in schools.

WHY THE GUIDANCE COUNSELLING IS ESSENTIAL?

In the context of the changing socio-cultural scenario the repertoire of guidance and counselling has been increasing at an unexpected speed. The widening of the spectrum of guidance and counselling demand a new approach to practice in schools, colleges, universities and other institutions in our country. It enables the students in enriching the perspective and promoting the attitude towards resolving educational, vocational and personal problems. The world of work continues to change as the result of escalating economic globalisation and technological advancements. As a result, the transition from school to work continues to become more difficult as the range of skills and dispositions needed to compete for desirable occupations increase. The consensus reached was that Guidance and Counselling should be an integral part of the education of children.

Fuster (2002) points out the goals of counselling as facilitating behaviour change, enhancing coping skills, promoting decision-making, improving relationships and facilitating the client’s potential. It is a personalized and individualised process for helping the individual to learn and acquire habits, skills, attitudes and interests which make him a normally adjusted being. Therefore, it is evident that the process and goals of guidance and counselling is to help the client move towards a greater level of self understanding and self – acceptance. The need for guidance and counselling in modern times has increased because of the multiplicity of problems that the individuals have to face in the various domains of life.

Rapid changes in every aspect of living cause many strains and stresses on the individual. The adolescent children may then inadvertently and unconsciously respond with the problems. They may feel disempowered and overwhelmed by the current system of education. In this rapidly moving complex society, the students are struggling for the better adjustment and existence. If they are not getting proper guidance they may engage in anti-
social activities. The age of the students during adolescence is sensitive and highly inflammable. They experience conflicts between themselves and the society and even within them. Indiscipline is a severe problem in our present educational system. There are many social problems that teenagers go through. Consuming drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, continue to be a serious problem for these children. Despite national efforts to eradicate these problems, many students still find their way to these mind altering chemicals. Through a well planned guidance and counseling programme, the substance abuse can be controlled among these students.

Selecting an appropriate career is a critical task that faces all adolescents in all societies. The selection of a career made during the senior year is among the most critical decisions in a person's lifetime. This decision has a far-reaching impact on the senior's future in terms of lifestyle, status, income, security and job satisfaction. The selection of a wrong vocation can lead to unhappiness and ultimate failure, because the occupation that the person follows is not merely a means of earning a livelihood. All persons are not equally suited for all vocations. Every vocation requires certain educational and professional qualification and preparation and only those having them will succeed in it. While selecting an occupation a person should not be taken in merely by the ambition of his parents but its suitability to his / her own inclinations and aptitudes. But the task of finding the true inclinations and aptitudes of a person and helping him to select a right occupation is not easy. So the students have to be helped in developing an integrated and adequate picture of themselves and their role in the rapidly changing occupational world. The career guidance is provided by the consultants so that an individual can easily select an appropriate occupation or education which goes well with their capabilities, skills and interest. In these circumstances, it is essential to help and guide the youth to worthwhile channels through the introduction of guidance and counseling services on a universal scale in our educational institutions.

Unfortunately most of the schools do not have proper counselling facilities in this area. So these children are forced to turn to their peers or other media for support and guidance or they live with their problems. Under these circumstances it becomes essential that the educational institutions should come forward for equipping the children properly for cultivating life skills, moulding personality and promoting capacities to choose right vocation according to their aptitude and interest through an organized programme of guidance and counselling.

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

The following are the suggestions made for the better implementation of guidance and counselling programmes.

- Guidance should be conceptualized in a broader and more comprehensive and holistic view, incorporating vocational and other aspects of development.
- Provision of a systemic approach which analyzes issues within a broader social system.
- Guidance should be a preventative activity while counselling fulfils a primarily curative function.
- Guidance and counselling should be an integral part of the education process and that more time and status should be allocated.
• Guidance curriculum and responsive services can then be structured to address human relationships, career development, life skills, social values, self development, and learning skills.
• Guidance teachers should be given more appropriate training, especially in counselling skills.
• More resources should be devoted to guidance and the private sector should play a more central role in the guidance provision, particularly as the state is unlikely to be able to afford to support school-based guidance programmes.
• The guidance curriculum should be sensitive to gender.
• The needs of each student will also be easily identified through guidance and counseling and individual responsive services must be planned.

The main objectives of the guidance and counselling programmes should be the maximum development of the individual and the entire programme should be organised keeping in mind this purpose. Counselling is not an end in itself but it is a means, an integral part of the total educational goal of leading an individual to a more authentic existence than hitherto.

REFERENCES