

Academic Learning and Career Guidance in School based Education

Suman S.T¹ and Harrus De²

¹Student, Department of Social Work, Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura, India

²Corresponding Author: harrusde9@gmail.com

Received: 13-12-2022

Revised: 04-01-2023

Accepted: 24-01-2023

ABSTRACT

In order to address the child's physical, psychological, and social needs, the family structure and social trends have changed, and the old support system has broken down. This has highlighted the need for an alternative support system. School counselling is undoubtedly the link that could close this gap. In India, the field of school counselling is still quite new and needs to grow and become established. The standards for its use must be established, the necessity for school counselling must be properly acknowledged, and every effort must be made to use this crucial psychological talent in avoiding and addressing the varied psychosocial needs of schoolchildren. The goal of the current research is to examine a developing topic of counselling in Indian schools. The purpose of this essay is to highlight the necessity of counselling in Indian schools, examine the history of counselling in Indian schools, evaluate the current state of counselling in Indian schools, and examine the standards that should be established for the practise of counselling in Indian schools. A review of the literature was used as the methodology.

Keywords: career, guidance, education

I. INTRODUCTION

The field of counselling is unquestionably a product of the western world. The Indian society has served as a shock absorber in times of crisis and a support system to deal with the numerous psychosocial challenges because of its strong familial ties, loving communal spirit, and spiritual character. This may be one factor in the slow expansion of the counselling profession in India. With changing gender roles, the dissolution of the joint family structure, increased academic competition, increased child sociability, significant technological advancements, peer and parental pressures, and an environment rife with stress and strain for the youngsters, Indian society appears to have undergone a total metamorphosis in recent years. School counsellors seem to have appeared like a blessing to the students and the parents to cope with the increased stress and strain and contribute towards maintaining the mental health of the younger generation. The trained school counsellor must be an assertive advocate creating opportunities for all students to pursue dreams of high aspirations. The counsellor assists students in their academic, career, social, and personal development and helps them follow the path to success. The school counsellor serves as a leader as well as an effective team member working with teachers, administrators, and other school personnel to help each student succeed. The school counsellor as consultant empowers families to act on behalf of their children by helping parents and guardians identify student needs and interests, and access available resources¹.”

A comprehensive school counselling programme is developmental and methodical in character, sequential, clearly defined, and accountable, according to "The American School Counsellors' Association." It is based on a combination of counselling techniques, educational philosophy, and developmental psychology (ASCA, 1994). The educational enterprise would not be complete without the school counselling programme. The program's primary goals are prevention and proactivity. It helps all students develop and use skills for lifelong learning. More specifically, school counselling programs employ strategies to enhance academics, provide career awareness, develop employment readiness, encourage self-awareness, foster interpersonal communication skills, and impart life success skills for all students. At the foundation of the school counseling program is the delivery of counseling, consultation, coordination and advocacy services to all students, parents and the school community. Individual and group counselling, classroom guidance, consultation, including meeting with parents, teachers, administrators, staff and community members, and coordination of special programs and initiatives are integral parts of all school counseling programs.”

School counselling is a profession which: i. aims primarily to improve the academic performances of the students. ii. provides vocational guidance. iii. helps in social and personal development of the students. iv. provides the much needed bridge between parents and students. v. functions in preventive, remedial and developmental modes. vi. functions to remove barriers to development if any, in the individual or in the environment. vii. works to identify, assess, evaluate, solve or refer, if necessary, problems of students which may be behavioural, emotional, social, academic or psychological. viii. Involves the team efforts of the teachers, the parents and other school staff.

According to the Indian Institute of School Psychology, school counselling is as follows: With M. Sc. or PG Diploma in school counselling, those who work in schools are considered professional school counsellors and educators. School counselling is a distinct and specialised profession globally. They develop and implement a comprehensive, developmental program to facilitate the academic/learning skills, personal/social developmental skills competencies, spiritual care and understanding, and career options counselling tasks, appropriate to the needs of pre-K-12 students.

School counsellors have specialized training which includes knowledge of human development, cultural diversity, counselling and consultation and techniques, appraisal and assessment, career development, besides adequate tools to identify, assess, evaluate behavior, social, emotional, learning difficulties and when needed make referrals of severe cases, of mental health to clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists for treatment.

II. HISTORY OF SCHOOL COUNSELING IN INDIA

School counselling in India is a relatively young profession. An attempt is made here to trace the history of school counselling in India. As per an interview of Dr. BMC Shetty with Sudeshna Chatterjee in Indian Express entitled, 'Schools are neglecting counselling', i. The first Child Guidance Clinic was started by Tata Institute of Social Sciences at Wadia hospital in 1938. ii. The Wadia hospital started a school health unit in the same year, which referred children with behavioural problems to the hospital. iii. The first school mental health clinic was set up at Nair hospital in 1979.

Asha K. Kinra also gives some of the important milestones in the development of school counseling in India. i. The Ministry of Education, Government of India, established the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance in 1954. ii. After the third five year Plan (1961), guidance services were initiated in schools by the trained counsellors and career masters with assistance from school teachers. iii. By the end of the third five year plan (1966), the number of schools providing guidance service in one form or the other was 3000. But these schools housed only a career master whose job was simply to provide vocational information. iv. With effect from the year 2000 the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance has delegated the work of guidance professionals' training to the Regional institutes of Guidance at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhuvaneshwar and Mysore. v. The main objective of the State Educational and Vocational Guidance Bureaus is to assist students in the choice of suitable educational curricula and career options.

III. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

As per an article in Times of India, Hyderabad edition: 'The secondary education department is expected to issue a government order making counselling centres manned by clinical psychologists mandatory in government and private schools.'

As per an article by Gauree Malkarnekar published in The Times of India, Goa edition: 'The career counselling needs of students will now be taken care of in their schools itself. Training shall be provided to one teacher each in all the government and government aided schools by the 'Goa Education Development Corporation (GEDC)' who will in turn give guidance to the students about the courses of their interests and the institutes offering them in Goa and across the country.'

As per an article by Preetu Venugopalan Nair in Timesofindia / Education, Kochi edition: i. 'As per a decision taken by the 'Board of Governors' of 'Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan', the secondary and senior secondary classes of all the Central Schools shall be equipped with an education counsellor. The counsellors shall have the responsibility of dealing with low achieving, under achieving and high achieving students apart from counselling students to face examinations without fear and help to instill in the students skills related to study habits, time management, communication skills and stress management. ii. As per a principal of a Kendriya Vidyalaya "Conducting class surveys to know the career choice of students and providing career guidance to students based on the results of an aptitude test and interest inventory is another major work that has been assigned to the counsellor." iii. It shall also be the responsibility of the counsellors to organise career related conferences and exhibitions, programmes entitled "meet the professional" and to set up "career guidance corners" in schools. iv. Group guidance activities shall be carried out at least once a week. v. As per the circular, individual counselling too may be taken up by the teachers as far as possible.

A Special Report by Mitra Neelanjana, Yasmeen Summiya, Roy Swati, Patil Anupama, T. Varoodhini in 'Education World: The Human Development Magazine' throws ample light on the various issues related to counseling in Indian schools.

Some of the alarming facts and issues raised in the article are reproduced here: i. The shocking suicide of Rouvanjit Rawla studying in class VIII of La Martiniere for Boys, Kolkata reportedly because he couldn't bear the humiliation of corporal punishment and a spate of student suicides have been widely reported in India's commercial capital Mumbai. ii. The present generation has to cope with the increasing social networking websites, 21st century steel and glass malls and speed dating, the heavy burden of excelling in school-leaving and entrance exams has piled mountainous pressure on the nation's 260 million youth under 21 years. iii. The students have to adjust with rampant consumerism, increasing use of drugs, sexual abuse along with possible single parent families as a result of higher rates of divorce. iv. As per the majority of school counselors 'Education World' correspondents spoke with across the country, student strain and anxiety is mainly caused by the overwhelming unrealistic parental expectations and pressure to score high grades in annual examinations.

Millions of well meaning parents are pushing children into a continuous round of private tuitions, intensive study sessions and cram schools. The outcome is pervasive fear of failure, paranoia and chronic depression among children.

According to one estimate, in 2006- 07 there were 5,857 exam-related suicides countrywide. And in nine out of ten cases, the cause of this final act of desperation was fear of parental wrath over sub-optimal academic performance. v. Counselling services have also been extended to the parents in certain cases as a result of the pushy parent phenomenon. vi. Majority of the parents are reluctant to acknowledge that their children might need counselling. vii. Counsellors give advice to the students to handle problems such as bullying, poor self-esteem, confrontation of parents about socialisation, loneliness and academic pressure. viii. The method of one-on-one counselling is adopted for disturbed children and the method of self-awareness workshops is adopted for the students in general. ix. Counselling is tacitly acknowledged as critical to delivering a stable and well balanced educational experience in the boarding and international schools of India. With students living away from home and the comforting presence of parents, pastoral care assumes greater importance in residential schools. x. However, whereas the country's 188,000 private day, boarding and international primary-secondary schools are showing an awareness of the need to service the emotional well-being of students, there's little awareness about the value of counselling within the government school network. India's 135 million children enrolled in 1.09 million government schools countrywide — despite having to bear with a plethora of problems including teacher shortages and truancy, inadequate infrastructure and poor learning outcomes — seldom have recourse to any form of counselling services or advice. xi. A sharp contrast can be seen in the higher education institutions of India and the West, especially the US where it is mandatory to provide professional counselling services, even in the public and private schools. The IITs/IIMs are an exception to this. xii. In India, there is also a dearth of institutions (NIMHANS, Bangalore and Bharathiar University, Coimbatore) offering postgraduate and doctoral study programmes in student counselling. Usually, it is studied as only a subject in the Master of psychology degree programme of universities. xiii. Career guidance and planning have been acknowledged only recently as important to enhance the potential of the students and maximise their contribution to society. It is also important that a career counsellor should work in a scientific and culture resonant manner. However, the training facilities are quite inadequate. xiv. There is an urgent need to provide counselling services to the 1,000,000-plus government schools, 509 universities and 31,000 colleges of the country.

IV. FINDINGS

Whether there is a genuine need for counselling in Indian schools is the key question on everyone's mind, including educators, policymakers, and parents. Are we merely attempting to mimic American standards and mores? We must determine whether there is actually a need for a professional school counsellor in light of the vast variations in the cultural and family systems of Indian society. Also, it's critical to determine whether Indian society is prepared to accept counselling services or still stigmatises them. i. The first finding of the study is that there is definitely a need for counseling in schools in India. ii. This is evident with the increasing number of suicide cases in the school students. iii. Changing family trends such as working mothers, divorces, single parent families have reduced the emotional cushioning provided so far by most of the Indian families. iv. Also, the immense technological advances, the increased social life and issues such as drug abuse have contributed to stress and strain on the students. The educational field is a vast area with huge potential for counseling. The needs of the students are varied.

The necessity of counselling the parents is a crucial realisation. Parents may receive counselling from the student counsellor on the following topics: i. It's important to embrace a child for who he is, with all of his flaws and qualities. ii. The negative effects of placing excessive academic pressure and stress on the youngster. iii. The child's interests, skills, and suitability for and career choice. iv. The child's learning difficulties, if any, and coping mechanisms. v. The child's psychosocial issues, if any, and coping mechanisms. eliminating the stigma associated with counselling.

Counseling is also required for the school staff and teachers in order to properly manage the large number of pupils with various backgrounds and distinctive personalities. The following concerns should receive the counselor's attention: i. An awareness of the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment. ii. Recognizing the individuality of every child and accepting each pupil for who they are. iii. Determining the students' learning impairments. iv. Determining the child's psychosocial/adjustment issues. v. Techniques for maximising each student's potential. vi. The students' overall growth.

V. CONCLUSION

In India, the field of school counselling is one that will endure. Despite being young, it has enormous growth potential. With globalisation, significant changes in family structures, and shifting social values putting a great deal of stress and strain on pupils, it can meet their evolving demands. To prevent and treat the children' growing psychosocial problems and to give them a comprehensive education, the school counselor's specific talents must be used.

REFERENCES

1. <http://www.edtrust.org/dc/tsc/vision>.
2. <http://www.bcps.org/offices/sss/psManual/PS-203.pdf>.
3. http://expressindia.indianexpress.com/news/ie/daily/19990_628/ige28083.html.
4. <http://www.educationworldonline.net/index.php/pagearticle-choice-more-id-2428>.