



The Importance of guidance and counselling in an adolescent's life: A review of literature

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Abstract

Guidance and counselling services are very crucial tools in human development especially during adolescent stage. Adolescent stage is characterized by rapid growth and change in physical, social, spiritual, moral and intellectual component of life. Most of adolescents are in schools, that is why guidance and counselling services are highly needed in this stage. Guidance and counselling are the assistances made available by qualified and trained persons to an individual of any age to help him to manage his own life activities, develop his own points of view, make his own decisions and carry his own burden. The purpose of guidance and counselling in schools is to improve academic achievement, foster positive study attitudes and habits, increase acquisitions and application of conflict resolution skills, and decrease school dropouts. Lack of guidance and counselling in adolescence has produced an increase in unpleasant outcomes in the society. These include school dropouts,

drug abuse, crimes, and even failure to secure jobs. The task of educational guidance and counselling is to enable a student to adjust himself to his studies by improving his study attitude and removing subject matter difficulties. The integration of guidance and counselling services in schools can help to create a favourable learning environment, promote student well-being and enhance academic achievement. This review paper aims to highlight the importance of guidance and counselling in adolescence period.

Keywords: Guidance, counselling, human development, adolescents, student well-being, academic achievement

Introduction

In the modern age, the need for guidance and counselling has significantly increased due to the many problems individuals encounter in important areas of life. The terms guidance and counselling are used interchangeably. Both guidance and counselling are mutually related processes but not the same. Guidance is a more comprehensive process which includes counselling. Guidance services include many other services apart from counselling. Counselling is the most specialized and most important service in the whole guidance programme. The aim of guidance and counselling is to assist behaviour change, enhance coping skills, promote decision making, and improve the relationship and to facilitate users' potential. Guidance and counselling help to recognize and understand about one's talents and abilities, help to develop an optimistic outlook for removal of undesirable traits, it aids to develop resourcefulness and self-direction in adapting to changes in society. The major aim of guidance and counselling services is to encourage students' academic, social, emotional and personal development. Therefore, these services are an integral part of education.

Adolescence is the transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19.

Adolescence is best defined as a critical period in relation to puberty and also considered as revolution of person's life which starts with biological transformation and finished in adjusting with those challenges in the society. Adolescence becomes a challenging as well as a puzzling chapter of lifespan development for those who are facing and also for the parents and adults who are raising and nurturing their children. This period is marked by a variety of physiological, cognitive, emotional and social changes that take place.

Adolescents need special attention in the country. In today's time teenagers are getting addiction to drugs, getting criminal records, school dropout, delinquency, poor mental health which leads them to attempt suicide, suffers from anxiety and depression. In spite of increase in literacy rates and better health condition since independence, the inclination of choosing incorrect decision or being confuse is incessantly increasing among children because of lack of guidance services. They used to waste their golden time that they might spend in learning and knowing further constructive activities and also it would deteriorate their self-confidence and motivation to acquire up tasks that have proved to be hard in doing it. They are not mature enough to critically evaluate baffling situation arising due to these changes around them. Many of these problems not only require remedial treatment but also prominently help from guidance and counselling profession to take preventive efforts. Thus, adolescence becomes a challenging as well as a puzzling chapter of lifespan development for those who are facing and also for the parents and adults who are raising and nurturing their children (Lerner et al 1998).

Definitions of guidance

According to Jones (1970), "Guidance is the help given by one person to another in making choices and adjustments and in solving problems. Guidance aims at aiding the recipient to grow in his independence and ability to be responsible for himself. It is a service that is universal - not confined to the school or the family. It is found in all phases of life - in the home, in business and industry, in government, in social life, in hospitals

and in prisons; indeed, it is present wherever there are people who need help and wherever there are people who can help”.

According to Crow and Crow (1960), “Guidance is not direction. It is not the imposition of one's point of view upon another. It is not making decisions for an individual which he should make for himself. It is not carrying the burden of another's life, rather guidance is assistance made available by personality qualified and trained men or women to an individual of any age to help him manage his own life activities, develop his own point of view, make his own decisions and carry out his own burden”.

According to Good, “Guidance is a process of dynamic interpersonal relationships designed to influence the attitudes and subsequent behavior of a person”.

Definitions of counselling

According to Gustad, J. W. (1953), “Counselling is a learning oriented process, carried on a simple, one-to-one social environment, in which the counsellor, professionally competent in relevant psychological skills and knowledge, seeks to assist the client, by methods appropriate to the latter's needs and within the context of the total personal program, to learn how to put such understanding into effect in relation to more clearly perceived, realistically defined goals to the end that the client may become a happier and more productive member of society”.

According to Patterson (1954), “Counselling is the process involving interpersonal relationship between a therapist and one or more clients by which the former employs psychological methods based on systematic knowledge of the human personality in attempting to improve the mental health of the latter”.

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.

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). Choosing an appropriate career is a crucial task for adolescents in every society. The career decision made during the senior year is one of the most important choices in a person's life. 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 Shertzer 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.
- 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.

Methods of the Review

Sources of data

In order to study the importance of guidance and counselling in an adolescent's life, we did a comprehensive search (Google Scholar, Research gate, Science direct, PubMed) for research studies conducted in different countries. The following search terms were used: guidance and counselling in schools, student counselling services, impact of counselling on student development, school-based counselling, importance of guidance in education, role of guidance and counselling in schools and importance of counselling in adolescent life. More than 30 full text articles were reviewed for inclusion.

Selection criteria

In this review the following criteria were used to identify studies:

- It was determined that only relevant studies should be the part of this review.
- Full text studies were obtained and reviewed.
- Articles not written in English language were excluded.

A critical review of the literature

Das (1990) studied the effect of group counselling intervention on the academic self-concept, achievement and school adjustment of 204 ninth-grade students (both boys and girls) in government secondary schools in New Delhi. The study followed an experimental design using a pre-test, post-test and double group experimental approach. Group counselling was found to be an effective method for changing academic self-concept, which in turn improved academic achievement and consequently enhanced school adjustment.

Kaur (1992) carried out a study among 1334 students, 56 guidance workers, 59 educational administrators and 118 parents in Punjab. Multistage random sampling was used. A self-structured questionnaire and checklist were prepared to collect the data. The results showed that in many schools, guidance and counselling were not considered essential attributes. There was no separate financial assistance for guidance and counselling programs. The barriers identified during the implementation of the guidance programs included the lack of full-time counsellors and the lack of awareness among parents.

Boldero and Fallon (1995) concluded that students faced severe and varied problems during adolescence and there was always a service gap that exists between students and counselling services. Young people were very reluctant to seek help, mainly from formal sources such as counsellors and psychologists.

Dhillon and Kaur (2005) conducted a study on government and public schools. They performed qualitative and quantitative analyses, revealing that students studying in private schools had higher career maturity than those in government-funded schools. Achievement motivation, self-concept and career maturity competence were also higher in private schools compared to government schools. The results showed that females had a significant relationship between career maturity attitude and career maturity competence, while males exhibited a significant relationship between career maturity attitude and external locus of control.

Witko et al. (2005) conducted a study among 2,360 senior high school students about their views on career planning. Data was collected using the Comprehensive Career Needs Scale. The findings showed that students considered career planning very important, with parents being their main source of advice. Students in grades 10 to 12 expressed the need for information about higher grade courses and guidance on selecting courses that would be eligible for their future careers. Specifically, 12th-grade students asked for better career counselling to help them make the right choices. The study underlined the need for effective career counselling programs.

Denison et al. (2006) examined the role of academic guidance interviews. The programme was evaluated by questionnaires issued to staff and students involved in the guidance interviews and by recording the performance of students who had failed the formative assessment in the subsequent summative assessment. It was concluded that the rescue of failing students required early recognition and tailored intervention with support for all participants.

Eyo et al. (2010) examined secondary school students' attitudes toward guidance and counselling services and found that female students exhibited more positive attitudes than their male counterparts.

Ogoda (2010) studied the attitudes of students toward guidance and counselling in public schools. He noted the importance of school counselling and highlighted several factors that hindered the success of counselling interventions: lack of professionalism on the part of school counsellors, absence of a counselling office, lack of designated time for counselling and unavailability of school counsellors.

Lynass et al. (2012) explored young people's opinions on which aspects of school-based counselling were useful and unhelpful. Their study concluded that young people viewed counselling as a valuable intervention that brought many positive interpersonal, emotional and behavioural changes in them.

Barmola (2013) designed a study to understand the role of large group guidance among high school students. There were 300 high school students, with 150 males and 150 females, who participated in the study. An experimental design was used to determine the effect of guidance on academic performance, mental health and career choice of the students. The study showed that guidance had an effect on academic performance and career choice but not on the mental health of the students.

Agi (2014) examined the effects of sex, class and school division on perception and attitude toward school counselling. He found that the sex of students was not significant in determining how they perceived and viewed counselling.

Mwangi and Otanga (2015) investigated the role of guidance and counselling as perceived by students. The study revealed that students had a positive perception and appreciation of guidance and counselling services. Their views and attitudes were influenced by the information they accessed, regardless of their gender or year of study.

Dhami et al. (2020) a study was conducted to understand adolescents' perception of the status of guidance and counselling provided to them, purposive cum random sampling technique was used for the selection of 200 students in the age range of 16-18 years of Ludhiana district. The sample was equally distributed over both the gender (100 males and 100 females), locale (100 rural and 100 urban) and gender with in locale (50 rural males, 50 rural females and 50 urban males, 50 urban females). The results showed that guidance and counselling for adolescents were the major areas of concern. Students who were unsatisfied with the guidance and counselling provided were those who needed more resources to address their problems. These students tended to be confused and made wrong decisions due to a lack of honest support and guidance. They needed clarity about their problems. Therefore, it was essential to have a counsellor in every school to help young minds resolve their issues.

Saxena and Wadhwan (2022) a study was conducted to measure school students' attitudes towards guidance and counselling and to see if age and gender influenced their attitudes towards seeking professional psychological help. It involved 103 students (51 boys and 52 girls) and used a 30-item version of the Attitude toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPHS). The results showed that students generally had a positive attitude towards seeking guidance and counselling services. Age and gender were not significant factors in their attitudes towards these services.

Rahman and Azmi (2023) conducted a research to study the importance of guidance and counselling services in high school education and provide remedial solutions for their implementation, 10 high schools were selected for the study using cluster sampling methods in the state of Assam. Data were collected from the students of 9, 10, 11 and 12th standards with a sample size of 60. Additionally, 30 teachers were selected to collect data. Quantitative data were gathered through student questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained from school teachers to gather valuable opinions regarding the importance of school guidance and counselling services. The results of the study showed that a systematic and scientific approach, along with adequate resources and trained experts, should be employed in schools to provide guidance and counselling services. It was found that both teachers and students felt the utmost need for this service to be provided appropriately. Guidance and counselling are essential for both students and teachers, enhancing academic and social success in the educational environment.

Conclusion: Based on the literature review we draw the conclusion that guidance and counselling not only support academic achievement but also contribute significantly to emotional, social and psychological well-being and aid in making informed career choices. This review paper suggests how effective counselling interventions can positively influence students' attitudes, behaviours, interpersonal relationships, fostering a healthier and more supportive school environment and also identifies key challenges that hinder the

effectiveness of guidance and counselling programs, such as lack of trained professionals, inadequate resources and insufficient time allocated for counselling activities. Addressing these issues is important for maximizing the benefits of guidance and counselling services. Today, it's important to raise more awareness about the advantages of guidance and counselling services in schools. We need more trained professionals in these roles to help adolescents gain the most from these services. Overall, guidance and counselling are valuable tools in promoting the holistic development of students at school, within their families and empowering them to become confident, responsible, and well-adjusted members of society.

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