

A STUDY OF THE NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, HUNZA GILGIT-BALTISTAN

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Abstract

The guidance and counseling of students is an integral component of the educational mission of the school. Guidance and counseling services and programs promote the personal, social, educational, and career development of all students. This study has been conducted on 100 students of secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan. The main purpose of this study was to find the need and importance of guidance and counseling in the schools at secondary level. A comprehensive structured questionnaire was used as a tool to collect the data. The collected data was processed and then its analysis was made through simple frequency and percentage distribution tables. The finding suggests that there is an impending need of guidance and counseling programs in the secondary schools.

Keywords: guidance and counseling, mental stress, confidence, coping

Introduction

Educational guidance is related to every aspect of education school / colleges, the curriculum, the methods of instruction, other curricular activities, disciplines etc. Educational guidance is the assistance given to the individual (i) to understand his/her potentialities (ii) have a clear cut idea of the different educational opportunities and their requirements (iii) to make wise choices as regards to school, colleges, the course : curricular and extracurricular.

According to K.P.Neerja(2011), "Counseling is a process which include a number of activities like giving information, advice and counseling etc."But it is not an individual activity like giving information / advice / suggestion/recommendation only.

Neerja(2003) said that, "Guidance seeks to help the individual discover his own talents in comparison to the opportunities of the world and help him prepare himself, so that he can find or develop a place in which he can live a well-balanced life and contribute his part to the welfare of his fellow man."This definition appears to be based upon the assumption that in the world everyone has a place and the function of the school is to assist the individual find that place and make the most of it, both for him and the society.

Arthur J.Jones (1951) defines guidance:

" The help given by one person to another in making choices and adjustment and in solving problems".

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According to Chibber, "Guidance seeks to help the individual discover his own talents in comparison to the opportunities of the world and help him prepare himself, so that he can find or develop a place in which he can live a well-balanced life and contribute his part to the welfare of his fellow man". This definition appears to be based upon the assumption that in the world everyone has a place and the function of the school is to assist the individual find that place and make the most of it, both for him and the society.

The research topic which has been selected is very vast and enormous. It is not possible for the researcher to conduct research at large scale, and that is why long duration cannot be taken for that, so researcher confined this research from students of secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan.

S.K. Kochhar (2005) considers "guidance as a personalized assistance made readily available by a sympathetic, mature, experienced and professionally qualified person, which gives it the status of the separate field of endeavor."

A large number of students are going to colleges and universities without proper planning. They think of selecting a career after finishing their education. It is, therefore, necessary to have well-organized guidance program to remove the defect. Society itself and its demands are continuously changing and becoming more and more complex without any guidance program it is not possible for a child to cope with the changing society. So, the program of Guidance is needed for all the children in every aspect of their harmonious development. Guidance and counseling is the bedrock for achieving self-actualization.

A study was conducted by Hudesman et al., (1986) "to compare the impact of structured and non-directive counseling styles on academic performance of high-risk students. Results indicated that students in structured counseling condition had higher GPAs than those in non-directive counseling condition at the end of semester." An analysis of guidance and counseling services in providing adequate guidance for secondary school students is of paramount importance; hence this study. The result from the study will help in knowing how guidance and counseling services are implemented in secondary schools in Upper-Hunza-Gilgit-Baltistan and the quality of guidance services received by secondary school students.

Traditionally, in our Pakistani society, the leader of the family or the local community was supposed to provide the necessary guidance and advice whenever any member of the family or the community needed it. Needless to mention, too often informal advice given without a clear understanding of the problem involved was harmful and misleading to the individual. With the passage of time, revolutionary and evolutionary changes have taken place in all walks of life. The variety of jobs, high aspirations of the people and vocational specialization have made the work of guidance very difficult. The head of the family or the leader of local community with the limited knowledge of changed conditions such as globalization, liberalization and consumerism is not capable of providing guidance to the youth of today.

Personal guidance deals with the personal problems of students related to their parents, family, friends, peer groups and teachers.

National Vocational Guidance Association in USA has adopted the following definition

“Vocational guidance is a process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, and 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. The purpose behind assisting the youth to choose, prepare, enter and progress in a vocation is the optimum growth of the individual.”

Gilgit–Baltistan formerly known as the Northern Areas is the northernmost political entity within Pakistan. It borders Pakistan's Khyber Pukhtunkhwa province to the west, Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor to the north, China to the east and northeast, Azad Kashmir to the southwest and Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir to the southeast. Together with Azad Kashmir and the Indian-administered neighboring areas, it forms part of the disputed Kashmir region, which has been the object of conflict between Pakistan and India since the two countries' independence and partition in 1947.

Gilgit–Baltistan covers an area of 72,971 km². It has 1,000,000 population.

Gilgit–Baltistan is administratively divided into two divisions which, in turn, are divided into seven districts, including the two Baltistan districts of Skardu and Ghanche, and the five Gilgit districts, Ghizer, Diamer, Astore, and Hunza–Nagar. The main political centres are the towns of Gilgit and Skardu. This can be visualized through the following table.

Table1
Division of Gilgit-Baltistan

Division	District	Area (km ²)	Population (1998)	Headquarters
Baltistan	Ghanche	9,400	88,366	Khaplu
	Skardu	18,000	214,848	Skardu
Gilgit	Gilgit	39,300	383,324	Gilgit
	Diamir	10,936	131,925	Chilas
	Ghizar	9,635	120,218	Gahkuch
	Astore	8,657	71,666	Gorikot
	Hunza–Nagar			Aliabad, Sikandarabad
Gilgit–Baltistan totals	7 districts	72,971	970,347	Gilgit

Educational guidance and counseling has become increasingly important over the last decades for students, parents and teachers. It relates to the interest and inclinations of students and the decision they take for their future careers. In the context of Gilgit–Baltistan of Pakistan not much attention has been paid to students educational and career counseling in the past. This remained as a low priority for two evident reasons: first, there was lack of awareness among the teachers, students about the significance of career counseling; and second, the scarcity of resources didn't permit schools and

policymakers to consider it as a priority. However, with increasing literacy rates and more choices of educational institutions and careers becoming available, people's interest and realization to understand the role of educational and career counseling in shaping students future is also augmenting. It is because of their indelible impact on students that teachers play increasingly important roles in influencing student's choices and decisions for their future careers. This study has been designed and conducted to understand counselor's role in the educational and career counseling of students in the context of Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan.

Gilgit-Baltistan used to be one of the most backward areas in education. However, there has been phenomena; improvements in both children's access to and quality of education over the last few decades in Gilgit-Baltistan (Shafa 2011). At present Gilgit-Baltistan has a system of education with schools setup by the federal government, community based schools and other NGOs schools. There are three education providing systems in Gilgit-Baltistan: The Government Department of education (DOE), Aga Khan Education Services (AKESP) and the private school system.

Government education department is the largest education provider in Gilgit-Baltistan. There are 1008 government schools in Gilgit-Baltistan. For the close and effective monitoring of schools, offices have been established in each district led by the deputy director of education (DDEs). There are four Directors of education to supervise and monitor the DDEs; the directors of education are accountable to the secretary education that provides the overall leadership to the institution.

Private sector has emerged as the second largest education provider in Gilgit-Baltistan. The need for private schools was felt as a result of people's dissatisfaction with the quality of education in the government schools. Some private schools were also opened to provide children the much needed success. However, the private school is mainly focusing on the quality education. There has been significant growth in the share of education in the private sector during the last few decades. There has been a visible increase in the number of schools, as well as the proportion of children's enrolled in these schools. Private sector operates schools in all districts of Gilgit-Baltistan the current graphs shows that there are 429 private schools with a population of 43066 students and 2133 teachers in these schools in Gilgit-Baltistan.

There are 126 AKESP schools and 822 teachers to teach 22141 students in these schools. AKESP's mission is to enable many generations of students to acquire both knowledge and essentials spiritual wisdom needed to balance that knowledge and enable their lives to attain the highest fulfillment'' AKESP is mainly focusing girls education with some enrolment of boys in the co-education classes. AKESP continues to work with the government and communities to develop the models of public/private partnership that play a vital role towards implementing the education sector reforms of the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

Methodology of the study

The questionnaire is used in this research. 100 students from secondary school 9 and 10 were selected through random sampling technique. In this way the sampling of this study was based on hundred students in total. The objective is to study the level of awareness among students about importance of guidance and counseling in the schools at secondary level and the awareness about guidance and counseling in students and awareness about the output the students gain from guidance program at secondary level.

Descriptive research refers to methods used in exploring a query or subject where the methods measure results instead of trying to predict outcomes or actions or determine cause and effect. Some types of descriptive research methods include surveys, analyses, case studies, observation and review of published reports or results. Pre-constructed structured questionnaire was used for the purpose of collecting data regarding opinion of people towards need of guidance and counseling program. For this purpose, a questionnaire was prepared which covered the aspects of the problem under study i.e. the need and importance of guidance and counseling at secondary school level.

To avoid ambiguity, the questions were constructed in simple and clear words. The students were required to tick mark the relevant one. It was finalized after a detailed discussion, consideration and re-arrangement and after checking its relevancy to the topic.

Results and Discussion

Table 2

Opinions of the students regarding lack of guidance and counseling programs in schools may result in low self-esteem

Item No.	Statement	Yes	No	Total
1	Do guidance services play an important role in the educational system?	100 (100%)	0 (0%)	100
2	Do you think lack of guidance and counseling is a cause of maladjustment?	85 (85%)	15 (15%)	100
3	Do you think the establishment of guidance and counseling cell will bring positive changes in the school?	90 (90%)	10(10%)	100
4	Does the unavailability of guidance services lead the students towards frustration?	83(83%)	17 (17%)	100
5	Do you think guidance and counseling develop confidence in the student?	82(82%)	18(18%)	100

This table shows that majority of the students 100% were of the opinion that guidance plays an important role in the educational system, 85% students were of the opinion that lack of guidance is a cause of maladjustment where 15% disagreed, 90% students agreed the establishment of guidance cell will bring positive changes in the school, where 10% students disagreed with this statement, 83% students said unavailability of guidance services leads students towards frustration, where, 17% disagreed, 82% students said guidance and counseling develops confidence in the students where 18% did not agree, hence, the null hypothesis is rejected .

Table 3**Opinion of the students regarding guidance and counseling to
facilitate curricular activities at secondary level**

Item No.	Statement	Yes	No	Total
1	Do you think the lack of guidance and counseling is a cause of creating mental stress in students?	80(80%)	20(20%)	100
2	Do guidance and counseling help an individual to increase his understanding and acceptance?	85(85%)	15(15%)	100
3	Do guidance and counseling diagnose the learning difficulties of students?	93(93%)	7(7%)	100
4	Do guidance and counseling make students familiar with the world of work and its reverse requirements?	84(84%)	16(16%)	100
5	Does guidance counseling help to make better relationship between students and the teachers?	82(82%)	18(18%)	100

The above table shows that 80% students are of the opinion that lack of guidance and counseling is a cause of mental stress, while, 20% student did not agreed with the statement, 85% students agreed that guidance and counseling help an individual to increase his self understanding and acceptance, while 15% students didn't agreed, 93% student students agreed that guidance and counseling diagnose the learning difficulties of the students while, 7% of the students were of the same opinion, 84% students agreed that guidance and counseling make them familiar with the world of work, where 16% students do not agreed with this, 82% students were of the opinion that guidance and counseling make better relationship between the students and the teachers, where 18% of the students did not agreed with the statement, hence, it becomes clear that majority of the students felt the need and importance of guidance and counseling services in their respective schools.

Table3**Opinion of students regarding positive changes bringing through guidance and
counseling programs at secondary schools**

Item No.	Statement	Yes	No	Total
11	Are the guidance workers needed in the education institution?	73(73%)	27(27%)	100
12	Do guidance services play an important role in the education system?	67(67%)	33(33%)	100
13	Do guidance services be started in the school from primary level?	86(86%)	14(14%)	100
14	Do you think students lack in decision making due to lack of guidance and counseling?	98(98%)	2(2%)	100
15	Do you think the establishment of guidance cell will help the students to solve their problems?	92(92%)	8(8%)	100

Table.3 shows that 73% of the students both from class 9th and 10th agreed that guidance workers are needed in the institution, where , 27% students did not agreed, 67% of the students said guidance play an important role in the education, similarly , 33% of the students disagreed, 86% of the students were of the opinion that guidance services must be started from the primary level, while 14% of the students did not agreed, 98% of the students said due to lack of guidance and counseling students fail in decision making about different careers, while 2% students were against this statement, hence, majority of the students are in the favor that educational institutions needs guidance and counseling services within their schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Data collected from the school students indicates that there is an impending need of guidance and counseling services in their schools. These are some of the major issues we are confronting with, no awareness about guidance services in society, non availability of facilities and guidance workers for this purpose, no importance given to guidance as a compulsory subject in the training institutes, guidance is considered as an opposite field from schools and no interest of the parents in guidance services. Besides these reasons the students gave opinion that guidance services must be started in the schools from primary level. The policy makers give due importance to the guidance services in the schools but they are not practically worked out. The students and the teachers suggested that guidance services must be given importance in the educational field.

In the light of above discussion the following recommendations can be made in order to tackle the problem in Hunza Gilgit-Baltistan.

- 1- There should be enough exposure of Guidance in the society and the educational institutions through different sources, so that there should be awareness of the true essence and meaning of guidance services among students of secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan.
- 2- Guidance in the secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan should be introduced as a compulsory subject in the teachers training programs and sufficient literature should be provided for the study.
- 3- Government in secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan should not limit the planning for guidance only in the papers rather it should be practically worked out.
- 4- It is recommended that the teachers of secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan schools should be given training in guidance during summer workshops.
- 5- Experts should be invited in these workshops to deliver speeches and provide modern information about guidance to them.
- 6- One year diploma in guidance and counseling in secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan should be started in the training institutes and the teachers should be encouraged to attempt it.

- 7- It is recommended that guidance services should be introduced in the secondary schools of Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan

The result of my study are that there in no guidance and Counselling Services there is lack of attention on student by teacher government and other administrative bodies and because of this there is no qualitative education.

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