

Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Schools by the NCERT's Trained Teacher Counsellors A Follow-up Study

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the changes in the school environment as well as the benefits accrued to students due to the implementation of Guidance and Counselling (G&C) services in the school. Guidance personnel trained from 2009 to 2015 by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) at New Delhi and its Regional Institutes of Education (RIE) at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru and Shillong, were included in the study. The questionnaires were mailed to 300 Counsellors and 100 Principals. Of these, 146 Teacher Counsellors and 27 Principals returned the filled-in questionnaire (response rate is 49 per cent). Focus Group Discussions were held with 210 secondary level students from Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and NCERT's Demonstration Schools. Teacher Counsellors and Principals stated that due to the implementation of G&C services in schools, there is a visible improvement in the school environment. Improvement in academic performance and reduction in drop-out, bullying, violence, aggression and indiscipline among the students were also reported. The subject teachers and parents have developed an understanding of the guidance needs of students, their developmental and behavioural issues and factors responsible for underachievement among the students. Teacher Counsellors suggested that there is a need to develop awareness about G&C, the appointment of regular Teacher Counsellors, providing space for G&C in the timetable, provisioning of funds for conducting G&C activities and separate

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counsellors for primary and secondary classes for both morning and evening shifts.

Keywords: Teacher Counsellors, Guidance and Counselling Services.

सार

इस अध्ययन में विद्यालयों में मार्गदर्शन और परामर्श (G & C) सेवाओं के कार्यान्वयन के कारण स्कूल के माहौल में परिवर्तन के साथ-साथ छात्रों को होने वाले फायदों का अध्ययन किया गया है। नयी दिल्ली स्थित राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद (एन.सी.ई.आर.टी.) और अजमेर, भोपाल, भुवनेश्वर, मैसूर और शिलांग स्थित क्षेत्रीय शिक्षा संस्थानों (आर.आई.ई.) द्वारा 2009 से 2015 तक प्रशिक्षित कर्मियों को अध्ययन में शामिल किया गया था। प्रश्नावली 300 शिक्षक परामर्शदाताओं और 100 विद्यालय प्राचार्यों को भेजी गई थी। इनमें से 146 शिक्षक परामर्शदाताओं और 27 प्राचार्यों ने प्रश्नावली भरकर वापस भेजी (प्रतिक्रिया दर 49%)। साथ ही केंद्रीय विद्यालय, जवाहर नवोदय विद्यालय और एन.सी.ई.आर.टी. के प्रायोगिक विद्यालयों के 210 माध्यमिक स्तर के छात्रों के साथ मुद्दा समूह चर्चाएँ की गईं। शिक्षक परामर्शदाताओं और प्राचार्यों के अनुसार विद्यालयों में मार्गदर्शन और परामर्श सेवाओं के कार्यान्वयन के कारण, विद्यालय के वातावरण में सुधार हुआ है। छात्रों के शैक्षणिक प्रदर्शन में सुधार हुआ है और ड्रॉप-आउट, धमकाने, हिंसा, आक्रामकता और अनुशासनहीनता में भी कमी आयी। विषय शिक्षकों और माता-पिता में छात्रों के लिए मार्गदर्शन की ज़रूरत, उनके विकास और व्यवहार संबंधी मुद्दों और कम उपलब्धि के लिए जिम्मेदार कारकों की समझ विकसित हुई है। शिक्षक परामर्शदाताओं ने सुझाव दिया कि मार्गदर्शन और परामर्श के बारे में जागरूकता, नियमित शिक्षक परामर्शदाताओं की नियुक्ति, समय सारिणी में मार्गदर्शन और परामर्श के लिए स्थान प्रदान करना, मार्गदर्शन और परामर्श गतिविधियों के संचालन के लिए धन का प्रावधान और सुबह और शाम की पाली के लिए प्राथमिक और माध्यमिक कक्षाओं के लिए अलग-अलग परामर्शदाता की आवश्यकता है।

Introduction

Guidance is viewed as a process of adjustment and development. It is regarded as an integral part of education and not a special psychological or social service peripheral to education. It is a continuous process aimed at assisting the individual to make decisions and adjustments from time to time.

It was the Education Commission (1964-66), which recommended that guidance should begin from the initial class of the primary school because it helps students to make a satisfactory transition from home to school, and to identify learning difficulties and a need for special education. At the secondary stage, guidance

aims at the identification and development of the abilities and interests of adolescents. The emphasis was laid on preparing trained counsellors to provide guidance services in all the secondary schools. The *National Policy on Education* (1986) also recognised the importance of guidance and counselling services for school-going children. The *National Curriculum Framework* (NCF 2005) focused on elementary school years and advocated teachers to use guidance approach. According to *NCF (2005)*, teachers with a 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.

Strengthening Guidance and Counselling Services: NCERT's Role

The Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education (DEPFE), NCERT, New Delhi started offering Post Graduate Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling in 1958, with the aim to train professionals to serve as counsellors in schools. Since then, many transformations have taken place in the structure and modality of offering the diploma from face-to-face to International Diploma Course for Asian and African countries through Distance or Online Mode in collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Canada. Beginning with 2009, the present Diploma Course is being offered in blended mode (distance or online and face-to-face) at six centres of the NCERT National Institute of Education (NIE), New Delhi and Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs) at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru and Shillong. In-service teachers deputed by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and State Education Departments across the country participate in this course every year. The course aims to train in-service teachers and untrained guidance personnel as teacher counsellors to guide students in school and other related settings. The duration of the course is one year divided into three phases Guided Self-Learning (January–June), Intensive practicum (July–September) and Internship (October–December).

The trainee teacher counsellors, are trained in various aspects of G&C, such as understanding about guidance as an essential service in school, teacher as an effective guidance functionary, the process and approaches to counselling, understanding human

development, strategies of adjustment and coping with stress, psychological assessment and its effective implementation for G&C, understanding about various careers, career development theories and implementing them for career guidance and counselling. The trainees develop expertise in individual and group strategies for G&C of secondary and senior secondary students. They are also trained to develop and evaluate school guidance programme. After completion of the training, the trainees are expected to provide G&C services to the students in the school set up.

Since 2009, more than 1200 personnel have been trained as teacher counsellors who are working in different school settings. The need, therefore, was felt to examine the extent to which the trained teachers are using their G&C skills in the schools and the benefits accrued to school students.

Review of Literature

Research reports that counsellors do assist minority and disadvantaged students to become self-advocates (Astramovich and Harris, 2007), provide timely support to students reporting maladjustment at home and in society (Agnihotri, 2012), provide knowledge about career options (Supreeth and Arvind, 2015), empower students to make decisions regarding their careers (Ramakrishnan and Jalajakumari, 2013) and assist students in getting occupational information and in choosing a job (Sirohi, 2013).

The career and academic counselling was seen as the responsibility of the counsellors (Joy et al., 2011). The counsellors were able to deal with the students successfully who hindered the classroom teaching process (Bryan et al., 2012). The teachers were convinced that the school counsellors could in a measurable way, address the troublesome behaviour of students. However, teachers also felt that counsellors were not well-equipped with the essential knowledge of G&C (Khansa, 2015).

The research studies reported that consistent supervision by the trained counsellors and adequate practicum experience during training were warranted (Suman. and De, 2015) and in-service training through workshops, seminars, and conferences should be made compulsory to enhance the knowledge and skills of the school counsellors (Wambui, 2015). In future, school counsellors would need to acquire culture mediation skills to help linguistically diverse

students and families (Portman, 2009). It is essential for school counsellors to possess multicultural competencies, knowledge and application of racial identity theory to regulate systemic influences on further racial and identity development in students (Patrick and Cyrus, 2008), new courses on research methodology, statistics and evaluation techniques should be integrated in counsellor training programmes (Randall and Coker, 2007), guidance and counselling should be compulsory in all the schools which should be well-equipped with modern and up-to-date equipment and teachers should be trained at regular intervals so that they are abreast with new techniques in the field (Dimmitt and Wilkerson, 2012).

Active support of the Principal is important to implement guidance and counselling services effectively in the school. The crisis intervention, individual counselling, small group counselling and referrals from school, and support to community resources were most valued by the rural schools' Principals (Gerta and Kelly, 2009) and the principals wanted improvement in areas such as multicultural counselling, programme evaluation and accountability as well as parent education (Beasley & Lisa, 2006).

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study included the followings:

1. To study the factors that facilitate the implementation of guidance services in the schools by the teachers;
2. To examine the changes in the school environment due to the implementation of guidance and counselling services; and
3. To investigate the benefits accrued to the students due to the implementation of guidance and counselling services in their school.

Method

The study aimed to examine the implementation of guidance and counselling services by teacher counsellors trained by the NCERT during the year 2009 to 2015.

Sample

The study was conducted on the teacher counsellors trained by the NCERT in its Diploma Course of Guidance and Counselling from 2009 to 2015, and a few Principals. The Diploma course is

offered at NIE, Delhi and RIEs of Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysuru and Shillong. A list of 716 trained teacher counsellors was prepared. A questionnaire was sent to about 300 teacher counsellors whose correspondence details and e-mails were available. A total of 146 teacher counsellors responded (response rate is 49 per cent). A questionnaire was also sent to about 100 Principals. However, only 27 filled in questionnaires were received (response rate is 27 per cent).

Focused Group Discussions were conducted with 210 students from Classes IX to XII studying in 11 schools (two schools each from Bhopal and Ajmer, and seven schools from Delhi). It was ensured that a school counsellor trained by the NCERT was working in these schools.

Tools used

The quantitative and qualitative data were collected in the study. The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire from the school counsellors. It contained questions concerning — (a) personal information, (b) guidance and counselling services provided to students, and (c) innovative methods used by teacher counsellors. A questionnaire for Principals also included similar sections. The qualitative information was collected from students through focused group discussions.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented in three sections — Teacher Counsellors' Report, Students' Perception, and Principals' Perspectives.

Teacher Counsellors' Report

Profile of Teacher Counsellors

A total of 146 teacher counsellors (73 male and 73 females) responded to the questionnaire. About two-third (67 per cent) of the teacher counsellors are permanent employees, 25 per cent temporary, 2 per cent free-lancers, and 5 per cent did not indicate their employment status. Further, most teacher counsellors (40 per cent) had a work experience of two to four years followed by the teacher counsellors (23 per cent) having work experience between a few months to two years.

Duties Assigned to Counsellors in the School

Table 1 indicates that the majority of teacher counsellors were assigned duties related to guidance and counselling. Besides these, they were required to be a part of various clubs and committees in schools such as discipline committee, cleanliness committee, co-curricular activities committee, etc. At times they were entrusted with the work to serve as class teachers, arrangement teachers, examination in-charge and school magazine in-charge.

Table 1
Duties Assigned to Teacher Counsellors in School

Area	N	Percentage
Guidance & Counselling	116	79
Subject Teaching	101	69
Life Skill Programme	71	48
Peer Education	52	35
Admissions	28	19
Library Work	10	7
Other Duties	94	64

Facilities Provided to Teacher Counsellors in the School

The teacher counsellors reported (Table 2) that the basic facilities available to them range from guidance and counselling room (46 per cent) to transport facility (16 per cent). Some of them shared projector, speaker, stopwatch, telephone and stationery were also available in the school. However, some of the teacher counsellors reported that there is no facility of any kind in the school to provide guidance and counselling to the students and shared that they have created their own 'Counselor's Desk', which is not according to the norms for setting guidance and counselling room and lacks privacy. They also have to face difficulties in getting access to chart papers, computers, etc. Therefore, they have sent a letter requesting to the concerned authorities, so that all the facilities may be provided to teacher counsellors working in different school settings.

Table 2
Facilities Made Available to Teacher Counsellors

Facility	Number	Percentage
Guidance and Counselling room	68	46
Computer	64	44
Printer	56	38
Cupboards	53	36
Career Corner	51	35
Books or Journals	46	31
No Provision of Funds	33	22
Psychological Tests	31	21
Allotted Funds After Submission of a Proposal	28	19
Transport Facility	23	16
Allotted Funds Activity-wise	18	12
Allotted Annual Funds	10	7
Provision under RMSA	9	6
Other Facilities	66	45

Identification of Students' Needs: Teacher Counsellors Approach

Guidance needs of students varied from academics, career to behaviour related issues (Table 3). They also required guidance to handle examination phobia, improving the ability to concentrate on studies, enhance memory, early age marriage issues, suicidal tendencies, emotions regulation, etc.

Table 3
Major Guidance Needs of the Students

Guidance Needs	Number	Percentage
Improving Academic Achievement	120	82
Career Guidance	113	77
Reduction in School Indiscipline	108	73
Improvement of Interpersonal Relationship	87	59
Dealing with Peer Pressure	87	59

Parent-Child Relationship	80	54
Teacher-Student Relationship	78	53
Prevention of Child abuse	48	33
Reduction in Violence	39	27
Dealing with Drug Abuse	32	22
Other Issues	51	35

Methods Used by the Counsellors to Guide Students

Teacher Counsellors' most preferred method was individual counselling and the least preferred method was a panel discussion (Table 4). They also used role-plays, *nukkad natak* and dramatics to impart awareness among students on various pressing issues. Career exhibitions, seminars and motivation talks by the experts and eminent personalities were also organised.

Table 4
Methods Used to Guide Students

Method	Number	Percentage
Individual Counselling	126	86
Interactive Talks	115	78
Group Counselling	114	78
Workshops	71	48
Using Therapies	50	34
Panel Discussion	30	20
Other Methods	51	35

Techniques Adopted for Parental Involvement

It is evident from Table 5 that the most common method to involve parents in the guidance and counseling process was providing them an orientation, followed by the counselling sessions for parents and sometimes conducting home visits. The teacher counsellors' responses also revealed that they mostly relied on parent-teacher meetings, telephonic conversations and e-mails to involve parents in the guidance and counselling process.

Table 5
Strategies Used to Involve Parents in the Counselling Process

Strategy	Number	Percentage
Orientation to Parents	96	65
Consulting Parents during the Process of Counselling to Students	89	61
Participation of Parent in School Activities	74	50
Guidance Sessions for Parents	64	44
Counselling Sessions for Parents	62	42
Home Visit	25	17
Other Strategies	40	27

Specific Issues and Strategies Employed by the Teacher Counsellors

The teacher counsellors reported diverse types of guidance needs among the students. They also revealed the strategies adopted by them to meet the needs of the students. These are summarised below.

Indiscipline

Indiscipline among the students was manifested in the form of behavioural issues and aggression. Behavioural concerns involved absenteeism, reporting late to classes, incomplete homework, misuse of technology, destruction of school property and creating disturbance in the classrooms. Aggressive tendencies in students were noticed in the form of bullying, fights, violence and abusive behaviour. The teacher counsellors expressed that indiscipline (bunking), aggression and bullying were the major issue of concern in the school.

The teacher counsellors reported that they used individual counselling, group counselling, peer counselling and parent counselling. During group counselling, group discussions and orientation programmes for parents and teachers were organised and motivational talks and participatory activities for students were also held. Role plays, skits and story-telling sessions were carried out to impart awareness about bullying. Further, the strategy namely, 'activity counting tool' was used, wherein students had to keep a tab on the number of misconducts and thus regulate their behaviour. In connection with individual counselling, both positive

and negative reinforcements were employed. For this purpose, a transactional analysis was used to collaborate with the teachers and to deal with the issues of indiscipline, especially absenteeism.

Low Academic Performance

This covered low academic achievement, casual attitude of students towards academics, stress and examination anxiety. Moreover, teacher counsellors felt a dire need to equip students with skills on time management, goal setting, memory enhancement and study techniques. Some of the teacher counsellors stated that low academic achievement and adaptation to a new environment were major problems in the school.

Individual and group counselling were used to help students enhance their academic performance and overcome examination related stress. Individual counselling involved psychological tests of aptitude and intelligence while group counselling included class talks (to discuss and practise study skills and to motivate students) and orientation programmes for teachers and parents were held. Peer facilitators were engaged to assist academically weak students. The students were also familiarised with relaxation techniques to reduce stress. Career counselling was also given to students, which helped them set clear goals and achieve them.

Psychological Concerns

The psychological problems observed among the students were negative thinking, anxiety, stress, emotional disturbances, depression and mental disorders. Addiction to drug or substance abuse and misuse of technology was also prevalent. Some of the teacher counsellors expressed that there is a specific problem of 'Liquor and Smoking' among the students.

Students were helped through psychological therapies (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Drama Therapy, Gestalt Therapy and Art Therapy) and peer group counselling (teacher counsellors collaborated with the psychologists to train students to be peer moderators). Further, for issues such as anxiety or stress and negative thinking, integrative method of counselling was used, i.e., class talks, seminars and discussions were incorporated in morning assemblies and subject teaching classes.

Interpersonal and Familial Concerns

Concerns, such as peer pressure, infatuation, problems in the teacher-student relationship and parent-child relationships were reported. Additionally, familial issues, for instance, single parent, parental illness or loss came to the light. Some of the teacher counsellors shared that the issues related to inter-personal relationships were the main cause of concern in their school. The students were provided with individual counselling (psychological therapies and mentoring) and group counselling (workshops, class-talks, awareness programmes, open forums, peer moderators), etc. The teacher counsellors shared that they conducted summer internships, set up E: Wall of expression (corner in the school where chart papers are put up and children are allowed to write down their feelings), which helped school authorities and counsellors to create interventions to address those concerns.

Improvement in the School Environment

Teacher counsellors reported improvement in the school environment due to the implementation of guidance and counselling services in schools (Figure 1).

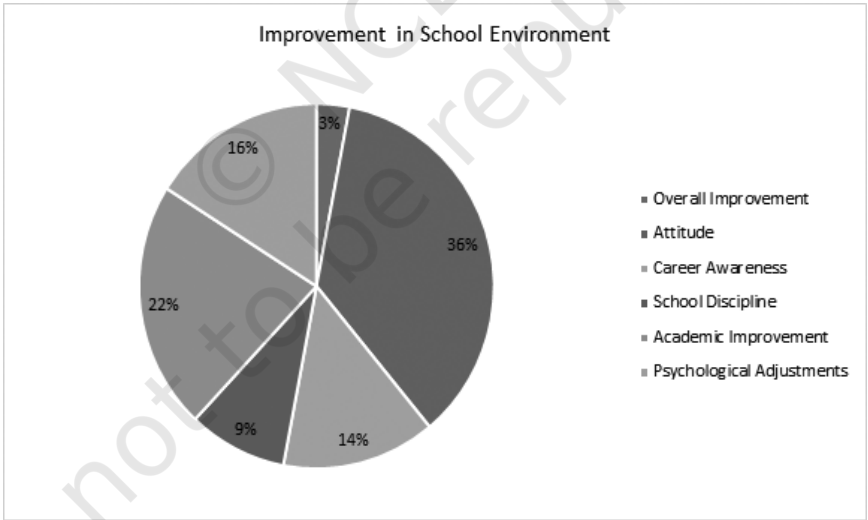


Figure 1: Percentage of responses showing improvement in the school environment

Attitudinal Changes

About 36 per cent teacher counsellors expressed change in the attitude of students towards guidance and counselling services in schools. The students themselves were coming to a counsellor to seek guidance and shared the issues with the counsellor. Some of the teacher counsellors shared that guidance and counselling services have changed parents' attitude towards counselling. It has created a better environment for students in school and at home.

Improvement in Discipline

It was shared by 9 per cent teacher counsellors that the number of cases of indiscipline in school has reduced. Teacher counsellors observed that there was a visible improvement in the behaviour of students, especially those who have been branded as 'trouble makers'.

Improvement in Academics

About one-fifth (22 per cent) teacher counsellors reported an improvement in academic performance among the students. The teacher counsellors expressed that, through guidance and counselling, low achieving students have shown tremendous progress in the areas of academics and they did well in their class test after getting guidance and counselling. It has also minimised drop out rate among the sixth and ninth class students.

Career Awareness

Teacher counsellors (14 per cent) expressed that there is an increased awareness among the students about career opportunities in different fields.

Interpersonal Relationships

It was reported by teacher counsellors (16%) that there was an improvement in the psychological adjustment of students which helped them to develop healthy interpersonal relationships. The students were able to understand the behaviour of others in a better way and act accordingly.

Overall Improvement in Personality

It was found by 3 per cent teacher counsellors that there is an overall improvement in the personality of students. The teacher counsellors observed positive behavioural changes and expressed

that the implementation of guidance and counselling service in school, made the students capable to analyse good or bad, self-motivate themselves for studying, acquire the knowledge of giving and receiving respect, and actively participate in sports, social activities, exhibition etc.

Students Perceptions

Focus Group Discussions were conducted among the students studying in Classes IX to XII in Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Demonstration Schools of RIE's at Bhopal and Ajmer. In almost all the schools, a teacher counsellor had to share a room meant for medical purpose in the school. Teacher counsellors, as well as students, voiced it strongly that whenever students needed to discuss some issues with a counsellor, because of the presence of a doctor or a nurse, they were scared to speak and share their issues. Majority of the trained teacher counsellors were not given duties related to guidance and counselling, rather they were asked to focus on teaching of their subject. Every year a temporary counsellor was appointed in the school with fixed remuneration and was expected to look after the guidance and counselling needs of students. Therefore, it hampered the process of counselling, such as rapport building and maintaining confidentiality. The counsellors were not able to maintain consistency in providing guidance and counselling to the students due to the lack of fixed timetable or timeslot for guidance and counselling in schools, arrangement periods were allotted on a day-to-day basis.

Counselling was a taboo for most of the students, teachers and parents. Whenever a student goes to a counsellor, other students suspect and tease them about their mental state of being. The teachers showed resistance to send students for counselling because according to them, guidance given by them was enough. Moreover, when students go for counselling, they missed their subject classes. The students also shared that parents considered counselling as a waste of time and suggested that counsellor should not meet parents. The students desired that a teacher counsellor should provide guidance on career in humanities, ways of strengthening student-parent relationship, information on various entrance examinations; conduct aptitude test; deal with homesickness, developing moral values, problem-solving, selecting a discipline of study, improving study skills, issue of puberty and

sex-related topics. The students further desired that guidance and counselling classes should be included in the school timetable, there should be a provision of two counsellors, counsellors should be available during vacations, counselling should be provided on Sundays and holidays, counsellor should conduct interesting activities, there should be more interaction between, students-counsellor and parents and confidentiality should be maintained. Students voiced the need for guidance in a more holistic way.

Principals' Responses

A total of 27 Principals responded to the questionnaire. With regards to the duties assigned to the teacher counsellors, majority of the Principals said that they perform activities related to guidance and counselling (93 per cent), followed by life skill programme (63 per cent), subject teaching (59 per cent), peer education (30 per cent), admission work (15 per cent), and library work (4 per cent). In addition, teacher counsellors were assigned academics related work (such as those related to class teacher, assistant teacher, subject in-charge and school magazine in-charge), administrative work (such as office work, examination in-charge, in-charge of the time table committee, membership of parent-teacher committee and pupil welfare fund committee) and supervisory activities (such as house-mastership and conducting co-curricular activities in schools).

When asked about the facilities provided to the teacher counselors, Principals responded that facilities such as career corner (67 per cent), guidance and counselling room (55 per cent), computer (44 per cent), cupboards (41 per cent), printer (37 per cent), books or journals (33 per cent), activity-wise funds (33 per cent), psychological tests (33 per cent), transport facility (19 per cent), allotment of funds after submission of proposals (15 per cent), allotment of annual funds (7 per cent) and provision under RMSA (4 per cent) and no provision of funds (19 per cent). The Principals also expressed that the materials such as stationery, art and craft materials and projectors were made available and facilities were provided as per the need of teacher counsellors (as mentioned in their proposals).

All the Principals' reported that the students needed career guidance (100 per cent), followed by areas such as reducing peer pressure (81 per cent), and parent-child relationship (77 per cent), low academic achievement (74 per cent), school indiscipline (70 per cent), interpersonal relationships (70 per cent), teacher-student

relationship (55 per cent), tackling violence (30 per cent), child abuse (30 per cent) and drug abuse (18 per cent). Adolescents' issues, examination stress, lack of confidence and self-esteem, bullying, maladjustment in residential setup and general homesickness were additional concerns of students as expressed by the Principals. When asked how parents are involved, most of the Principals responded that the preferred method for parents' involvement was consulting parents during the process of counselling (78 per cent), followed by orientation to parents (59 per cent), participation of parents in school activities (59 per cent), guidance and counseling session for parents (52 per cent), and visits to home (15 per cent). The Principals' responses revealed that career fairs were put up wherein information was disseminated on various career avenues. Parents are advised not to pressurise their wards to opt for a particular discipline, instead they should facilitate their children to choose a stream on the basis of their aptitude and interests. More so, parents who were themselves experts in their fields were called for giving career talks. Parents were also encouraged to be a part of various programmes initiated by the schools.

The Principals reported improvement as a result of implementation of guidance services in the school, such as improved academic result (22 per cent), attitudinal change (48 per cent), general improvement in psychological adjustment of students (19 per cent), improved career awareness (22 per cent), discipline (22 per cent), interpersonal relations (26 per cent), and overall school environment (30 per cent).

Conclusion

The study shows a visible improvement in the school environment due to the implementation of guidance and counselling services. It helped considerably in enhancing the academic performance of students, developing relationship between parents and teachers, and bringing positive improvement in the behaviour of students, especially those who have been branded as 'trouble makers'. Students show increased awareness about career opportunities in different fields and learnt to make an informed career choice.

However, there are a few impediments which need to be addressed by the school authorities to facilitate guidance and counselling services. The schools need to make provision for a dedicated guidance and counselling room, appointing regular

counsellors, a specific time slot, an earmarked fund for guidance activities, and optimum utilisation of trained guidance teachers. Guidance and counselling should be made available to the students during holidays and vacations. Also, awareness about the benefits of guidance and counselling services should be developed among the students, teachers and parents. The NCERT has developed “*Guidance and Counselling: Guidelines for States*” for effective implementation of guidance and counselling in the states. These guidelines may be useful in the schools for improving school environment as well as the performance of students with the help of teacher counsellors.

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