

## **School Counselling : A Neglected Link of Schooling System in India**

**Hardeep Kumar Deshwal\*, Dr. Mahima Gupta\*\***

*\*Research Scholar, Amity Institute of Education, Amity University, Noida, India,*

*\*\* Asso. Prof., Amity Institute of Education, Amity University, Noida, India*

### **Abstract**

*Counselling plays an important role in the development of a child. India is a developing nation cannot afford wastage of human resource in this geo political scenario. Indian schools are moving towards providing all facilities, infrastructure, for developing a balanced learning environment. Guidance and counselling helps an individual achieve well in various areas of personal and social life, as well as educational and career pursuits, which would ultimately help in proper utilization of manpower. We are all witness to increasing problems of millions of children addicted to drugs and alcohol, alarming number of abused children, teen suicides, gender bias, crime, violence, the school dropout and unemployment problem, bankruptcy of values pervading all over the world and more so in the third world countries. MHRD has been taking many initiatives to develop school counselling services accessible to students. School Counselling and relevant Guidance services need to be accessible for every students integrated with school curriculum.*

**Key words :** *School education, school counselling, adolescent education, guidance and counselling, secondary education, educational guidance, counselling psychology, school counsellor, Mental health in school, career counsellor, developmental education, depression among students,*

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

**Hardeep Kumar Deshwal\*, Dr. Mahima Gupta\*\***

*School Counselling : A Neglected Link of Schooling System in India*

*,RJPSS 2017, Vol. 42, No.2, pp. 160-166*

*Article No.22 (RS2046)*

**Online available at :**  
[http://anubooks.com/?page\\_id=442](http://anubooks.com/?page_id=442)

Every Indian spent almost 15 years in school starting from pre- school to 12<sup>th</sup> class. India as a country faced lot of drastic change in the area of social, economic, political and technological front. Social economical strata is dynamically going upward, poor trying to get lower middle, lower middle to upper middle, and upper middle to rich and so on. The main component of Indian Education System is School Education which comprises three segmentation Pre School starts from 3 to 6 year of age mainly run by private organization, Primary school run by government and private societies and middle school from class 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> and senior secondary school from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. Now a days most popular pattern of Indian schooling system is K-12 means which start from pre nursery to 12<sup>th</sup> class under same administration.

These Indian schools have full of all infrastructure, facilities and teaching and support staff but most of the schools in India has no School counsellor. School counselling services in India has occupied an unnoticeable space so far.

What is School Counselling? Following are a few definitions of school counselling. As per Education Trust: "School counseling is a profession that focuses on the relations and interactions between students and their school environment to reduce the effects of environmental and institutional barriers that impede student academic success. School counsellors foster educational equity, access, and academic success in a rigorous curriculum to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready to succeed in college and careers. 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 resources. According to "The American School Counsellors' Association": "A comprehensive school counselling program is developmental and systematic in nature, sequential, clearly defined, and accountable. It is jointly founded upon developmental psychology, educational philosophy, and counseling methodology (ASCA, 1994). The school counselling program is integral to the educational enterprise. The program is proactive and preventive in its focus. It assists all students in acquiring and using life-long learning skills. 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.

Counselling plays an important role in contemporary India. School counselling is a relatively young profession. The history of counselling in India can be traced to the establishment of the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance in 1954 by the Ministry of Education. In 1961, during the third Five Year Plan, guidance services were initiated in schools by trained counsellors and career masters with assistance from teachers. And, by the end of the third Five Year Plan (1966), there were 3,000 schools in the country that started providing guidance services in one form or the other. But they mostly focused on providing vocational information. Commissions that focused on the need to provide counselling services to students date back to as early as 1948–49 when the Radhakrishnan University Education Commission realized the need for providing student services in schools and colleges. Similarly, the Kothari Education Commission in 1966, which emphasized on guidance and counselling programme for assisting students in their choice of courses, indicated that remedial action and help in dealing with emotional and psychological problems should be an integral part of educational facilities provided in institutions of higher education. They believed that there should be one counsellor per thousand students. In 1984, the National Commission of School Teachers met a group of 150 meritorious students who had secured top positions in higher secondary education in different states of India to know what they thought about their teachers. One of their important suggestions to the commission was that an informal atmosphere should be created to discuss various options about their future. Whenever asked, students have voiced the need for guidance and counselling services. Policy-makers' view on Counselling in India Commissions such as Education Commission (1964-66), National Policy of Education (NPE, 1986) and Programme of Action (POA, 1992), National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005), and Rashtriya MadhyamikShikshaAbhiyan (RMSA, 2012) — all focused on having a trained counsellor in school and believed that this would help students to cope with the increasing academic and social pressures. Moreover, in the last few years, different committees have also realized the need and made it mandatory to have school counsellors. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) Health Committee Chairman, Dr. B.K. Rao, highlights that making counselling available to every secondary school child will lead to a dramatic reduction in his/her stress level and improve his/her behavior. He believed that the most common problems children face nowadays are scholastic performance pressure, lack of inter-personal communication, nuclear families and failure in relationships.

As per data published in Hindu in Apr 2014 ‘A majority of private school

in National Capital Region Have allegedly been violating the CBSE guidelines on a mandatory provision for full time school counselors, claims a latest survey by the associated chambers of Commerce and Industry of India. (Assocham).According to report ,only a meager 3 percent of around 3200 private schools in the Delhi NCR region have counselors to help students cope with the exam stress apart from providing career guidance. Stress management is a major area where all schools need to work on. Most students have no clue what do when they finish class 12.Despite the growing demand, the role of the school counsellor with Indian context remains an ambiguous one.”

In India, the term ‘counselling’ is misunderstood by many school authorities. For example, some still see counselling as a stigma. On the other side of the spectrum, there are some schools and parents who define counselling as an academic coaching. Although the actual role of a counsellor is to focus on the allround and healthy development of children and adolescents, the focus is also shifted to their academic success by helping them realize their full potential, guide them in choosing the right career based on suitable aptitude tests, improving their communication and interpersonal skills and help them deal with problems such as stress, loneliness, bullying, ragging, peer adjustment, parental and teacher pressure. Ironically, in the current scenario, many schools and parents have a different notion on the role of a counsellor i.e., they expect that a counsellor should not only focus on students’ problems but should also act as a channel for the flow of information among teachers, handle parent/student registration queries, advance students in academics, and substitute a class in the absence of a teacher. Sydow and Reimer (1998) analyzed 60 studies that were published regarding attitudes toward psychotherapists, psychologists, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. The results indicated that the relative status of psychologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, psychotherapists, and counsellors was ambiguous. They also found that psychologists were considered to be involved with research, diagnostics, counselling and work with children. Psychiatrists were perceived as clinical practitioners, who tried to cure mental disorders by psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, hypnosis, medication and electroconvulsive therapy. Counsellors were found to be preferred for the treatment of marital problems. A recent study has indicated that teachers felt that higher secondary school students needed counselling support to tackle behavioral and emotional problems, to be understood, loved and for belongingness. They also need it for security, approval, achievement, freedom and vocation (P.V.A. Abdul, and Sumangala, V. 2015). Yet the question arises: is this need actually taken into consideration by school teachers or school authorities; or is it just felt and abandoned,

thinking that other school staff can take care of it? In recent years, the Indian society seems to have undergone a metamorphosis with the changing roles of women, a breakdown of the joint family system, increased competitiveness in schools, increased sociability of children, immense technological advances, peer and parental pressures, resulting in an environment laden with stress and strain for children. School counsellor is like a blessing to students and parents to cope with the increased stress and strain of the younger generation. But unfortunately, after repeated circulars from the CBSE, there are many schools in India that are unaware of counselling services and thus, lack a full-time counsellor. Shockingly, in the country's 1,073 Central government-promoted Kendriya Vidyalayas, student counselling was an unknown concept. Most of the Kendriya Vidyalays in India started to appoint a full time School Counsellor on contract basis due to low acceptance of counselling services contractual counselors are more engaged in other activities other than counselling. India's 135 million children enrolled in 1.09 million government schools despite having to bear with a plethora of problems, including teacher shortage and truancy, inadequate infrastructure and poor learning outcomes, seldom have recourse to any form of counselling services or advice. But fortunately, a change can be seen in India's 188,000 private school managements, which are getting ready to implement the Right to Education (RTE) Act, which mandates induction of children from underprivileged background into elite private schools and demand a professional counsellor in order to deal with the issues of students' integration, adjustment and diversity. The country's 1,000,000-plus government schools, 509 universities and 31,000 colleges have realized the need to provide counselling services. The schools and university authorities have realized that the problems faced by students are diverse in nature and can't be dealt with a causal teacherstudent interaction. It calls for active intervention of a full-time counsellor. Although the need for counsellors is fast increasing, unfortunately, in India, only a handful of higher educational institutions (NIMHANS, Bangalore Bharathiar University, Christ University, NCERT) offer post-graduate and doctoral study programmes in student counselling. Mostly, it is studied as a subject in Masters of Psychology in universities. Thus, leaving the Government of India with a question: how this demand for counsellors should be met. In other words, the government should focus on higher educational institutes and colleges that can provide exclusive degree in counselling, thereby, meeting the need of school authorities for the betterment of students. Although there are some institutes such as the Indian Institute of Counselling in New Delhi, Indian Institute of School Psychology, School Counselling and Guidance in Secunderabad; yet some more institutes need to be set up, focusing on students.

According to new affiliation bylaws published in state gazette of Madhya Pradesh dated March,31,2017 the state government has made it mandatory to have at least one counsellor in each school for maintaining its affiliation.

“Each school shall appoint a counsellor, who shall perform duties at the school. The counsellor should be a graduate in psychology or a graduate having a diploma in psychology. This shall be made mandatory for all private schools for maintaining their affiliation of both Madhya Pradesh Board and the CBSE,” reads the official gazette.

The entire process of child development coincides with the years of schooling. This is a most defining phase of life. However, the environment becomes relatively complex and the child faces a variety of social, interpersonal, physical and emotional problems which need to be resolved. Massive and easy internet access and impact of social media increase the complexity level of adolescents in school. Schooling is only a part of the broader educational activity and mainly concerned with meeting the instructional objectives of education. Regular Guidance and Counseling, if provided at this juncture, can help the child in maximizing his/her capacities and in Self-Actualization. CBSE is the first and perhaps the only board of education in the country which has been providing psychological counseling services to the stakeholders since 1998. At present, the programme is run in two phases: Phase-I at the time of preparations and during examinations, and Phase-II at the time of declaration of results. The multiple-mode services of the board include telephonic counselling, online counselling, support material on CBSE website and Question & Answers Columns in leading newspapers. One of the major strengths of this ‘outreach’ programme is the voluntary, free of cost service provided by the principals, trained counsellors and active media support. The counselling services not only provide psychological support to students and parents but also help the board in defining trends and improvements when real time responses are analyzed.

With the purpose of gauging the need and scope of the support services available in the affiliated schools, the Board has designed a questionnaire to map the existing guidance and counseling facilities in May 2016. Despite of being few efforts by MHRD and other regulatory and advisory authority of Indian Education system school counselling services has not reach at sustainable level. Only few reputed school have full time counselors and due to over work they are also not able to perform their duties up to optimal level. India has highest number teenage suicide in the world. The American School Counselor Association recommends a student-counselor ratio of 250-to-1. India is far away from this ratio. High level of

addiction of mobile games and social media platform like facebook ,snapchat and instagram etc has increase the stress level among adolescents .Recent online group game like COC and blue whale has become the danger for school going students.

At this crucial time of change school counselling is essential in school. Nuclear family and working parents most of the time students become electronic gazette friendly and many students become addicted to these games, smart phones. These students are losing real social skills needed to cope up in life. School counsellor must keep close observation on these developing information to keep update him/herself. School counselling course should be run by more universities so that qualified counselling professional can be available in schools.School principals and administrators must be educated towards counselling and mental health services.

#### **REFERENCES:**

- NCF 2009, MHR,/RMSA,CBSE Circulars, NCERT guidelines, KV Sangathan
- Sodhi, K. and S. Kakkar. 2014. *Youth and counselling in India. International Journal of Public Mental Health and Neurosciences, 1(1), 23–33.*
- Sydow, K.V. and C. Reimer. 1998. *Attitudes toward psychotherapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts. American Journal of Psychotherapy, 52, 463–488.*
- Venkatesan, S. and R. H. Shyam. 2015. *Professional identity of school counsellors in India. Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 41(1), 25–36.*
- Vogel, D. and S. Wester. 2003. *To seek help or not to seek help: The risks of self-disclosure. Journal of Counselling Psychology, 50, 351-361. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.50.3.35>*
- Wilcove, G. and W. H. Sharp. 1971. *Differential perceptions of a college counseling center. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 18, 60–63.*
- Henderson, W.J. and W.J. Lyddon. 1997. *Client Gender Role Attitudes and perception of Counselor Characteristics. Journal of Mental Health Counselling.*
- The Hindu paper dated 15/04/2014*