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**A STUDY ON PARENTS' VIEWPOINTS TOWARDS GUIDANCE AND
COUNSELING SERVICES IN TEHRAN'S HIGH SCHOOLS**

Research paper in Education & Extension

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study the counseling services based on the views of parents of high schools' students as one of the main stakeholders of the services. Participants were 255 parents. A researcher-designed survey questionnaire based on three main domains counseling services including Educational, personal-social and vocational in high schools, and some necessary demographic and primary information included Parent's attitude towards counselor, guidance and counseling services, was used for data analysis. SPSS was used to code and analysis the collected data, producing descriptive statistics included frequency, mean, standard deviation and correlation: and also producing inferential statistic included independent sample t-Test. Results showed that about 60% of the parents have positive attitude towards the services up to 50% More than 90% of participations emphasized on the necessity of counseling and guidance program in all three main domains of guidance and counseling services and counselors' full-time presence in high schools.

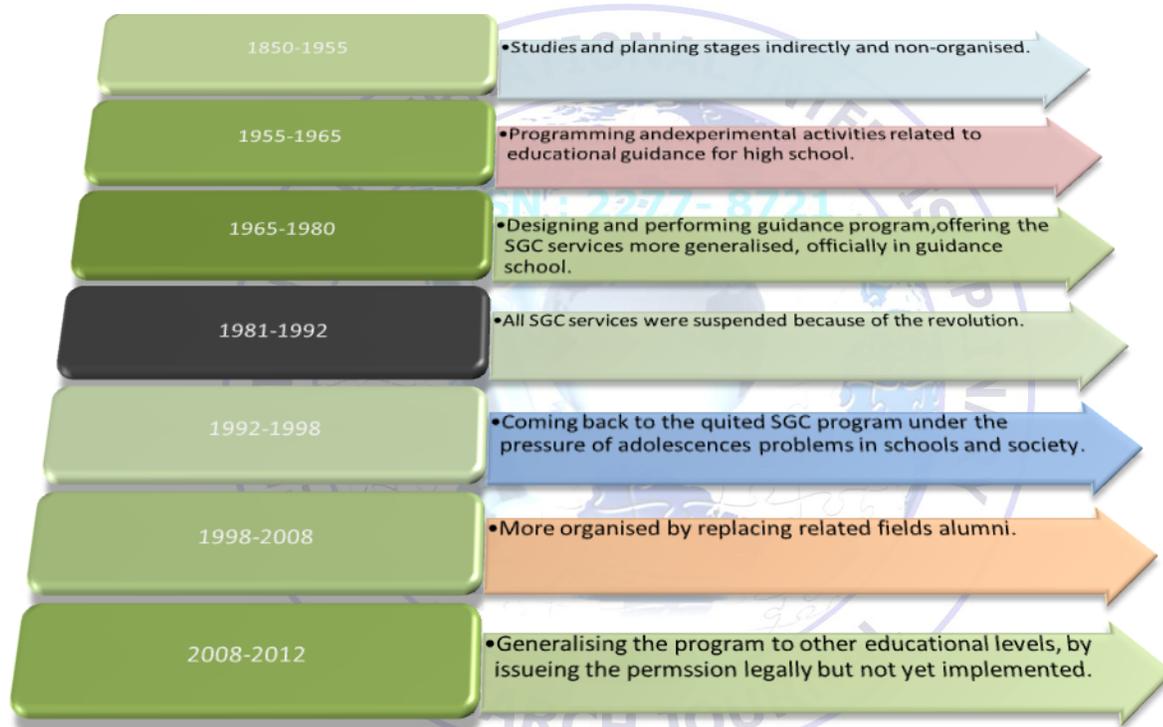
Key Words: Counseling and Guidance Services, counselor

(SGC is an abbreviation of school Guidance and Counseling)

Introduction

Guidance and Counseling

Guidance and Counseling has a rather long history in Iran's educational system more than 150 years. But officially and systematically It started with establishing "Darolfonoon" as the first Technical school, in 1949. A brief history SGC services in Iran:



(Saafi,2009)

Process of guidance and counseling has specific position in education system especially in secondary course, because it directly involves achieving its most prominent responsibility that is: " training human beings as hale and hearty citizens and requisite human resource", and in fact it is a facilitating mean for achieving the education goals. (Pasha sharifi, 1994).

A rapidly changing work world and labor force; violence in homes, school and communities; divorce; teenage suicide; substance abuse; and sexual experimentations are just a few examples of these challenges. These challenges are real and they are having

extensive impact on the personal/social, career, and academic development of the children and young people(Gysbers,1999).

Scholars in the field urge that comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are effective in assisting children and young people, along with their parents, to respond to these and similar challenges. It is believed that when school counselors have time, resources and the structure of a comprehensive program to work in, good things happen, that is, guidance counseling interventions improve academic achievement, students take more demanding courses, students develop and use career plans, and school have more positive climates (Day,2004).

Therefore, surveying the different activities in these processes has a particular importance in achieving the aims of education system, and supervising and evaluating through systematic researches on each and every one of its components is essential. The beneficiaries of the program are one of the most important groups to evaluate the program's services. There are lots of researches based on stakeholders' views about SGC services which just a few numbers of them have paid attention to the parents' views about SGC services in the world(Zabel,2007) and Iran as well Sorour Mojgan1980, Bakhshipoor joibari,1994, MoshkbidHaghighi 1994,.(Stokes, 1997).Quast(2003), 1999, Scruggs Kottman and Wilborn (1992) Curcio, Mathai, and Robert (2003) .While they are one of the important ring of the chain who involved in the program and services directly and indirectly. So, this study tried to pay attention to parents' views of SGC services.

Statement of the problem

Study of the SGC services given to the parents of Tehran's' High schools students to help their children in three main domains including Education, Personal-Social adjustment and Vocation

Assumptions of the Study

The counseling services play an important role in educational system as a guide and facilitator which lead it to the shortest way to achieve its goals.

The SGC services affects remarkably on distributing competent human resources of the society.

The SGC services help to decrease the quality and quantity of the problems, which students face with, during adolescents.

Operational Definition

Guidance: In this study Guidance services are considered as all a process of assisting students, individuals to help themselves through their own efforts, to discover and to develop their potential resources for personal fulfillment and social usefulness.

Counseling: In this study, Counseling services are considered as all activities, techniques, advices and information which are used and offered by counselors in Tehran's high schools to help students in three main domains of development, including: Educational, Personal-Social and Vocational.

d. Major Service Areas

The major service areas of guidance and counseling include:

1. Educational guidance and counseling

Educational guidance is so far as it can be distinguished from any other form of guidance. It is concerned with the provision of assistance to pupils in their choices in adjustment to the schools' curriculum and school life in general. Educational guidance is therefore essential in counseling service. Guiding young people to pursue the right type of education in which, for example the right balance is met for accommodating the human resource needs of a nation. This aspect of counseling should concern itself with assisting the students in their curriculum and school life choices. Students need assistance in choosing subject and planning for the courses which they take at these institutions of higher learning. All lecturers could be involved in this without any need for specialized training in counseling.

2. Vocational guidance and counseling

Vocational guidance is a process of helping individuals to choose an occupation, prepare for, enter into and progress in it. Vocational satisfaction requires that a person's interests, aptitudes and personality be suitable for his/her work. It plays its part by providing individuals with a comprehension of the world of work and essential human needs, thus familiarizing individuals with such terms as 'dignity of labor' and 'work value'.

This aspect of counseling addresses the learners' problems as regards to vocational choices. Again here the lecturers are best placed to give relevant advice to learners since they know their academic strengths and weaknesses in areas that may pertain to specific vocations, occupations or jobs. The fact that the lecturers know the interests and aptitudes of most of their students makes them the best persons to assist their students in areas that are related to their vocations.

3. Personal and social guidance and counseling

Personal and social guidance is the process of helping an individual on how to behave with consideration to other people. Primarily, personal and social guidance helps the individual to understand her/himself, how to get along with others, manners and etiquette, leisure time activities, social skills, family and family relationships and understanding masculine and feminine roles.

This aspect of counseling refers to the very personal problems that students meet. These problems may range from financial needs to interpersonal relationships. Although the lecturers may help to reduce these pressures, there is need for more specialized assistance from professionally trained hands. The fact that the lecturers may have an upper hand in interaction with the students only goes to show how crucial it is that they should get involved. As role models to the majority of students it is important the lectures are made aware of their crucial role in social guidance.

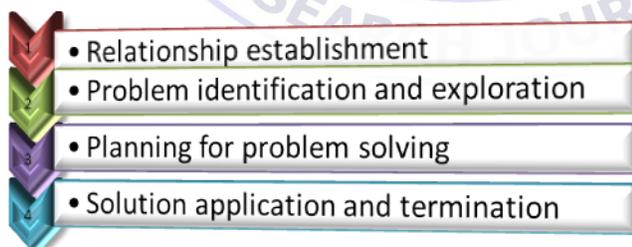
Counseling Techniques

On the basis of the nature of the counseling process and the part of the counselor, three techniques are used:

- 1. Directive perspective or counselor-centered counseling**
- 2. Non-directive, Permissive or Client-Centered Counseling**
- 3. Eclectic Counseling**

which can be offered in individual or group counseling.

Counseling Process



(Hackney& Cormier, 1996)

Research Questions

Following are the questions:

- 1) What is the attitude of parents towards the SGC services given in educational domain to their children in Tehran's high schools?

- 2) What is the attitude of parents towards the SGC services given in personal-social domain to their children in Tehran's high schools?
- 3) What is the attitude of the parents towards the SGC services given in vocational domain to their children in Tehran's high schools?

Hypothesis

H₁. Attitude of parents towards the given SGC services in Tehran high schools is positive.

NH₁. Attitude of parents towards the given SGC services in Tehran high schools is not positive.

Methodology

As survey is the most appropriate for obtaining factual or attitudinal information or for research questions about self-reported beliefs, opinions, values, motives, ideas, habits, feelings, desires, characteristics and present or past behavior (David & Sutton 2004; Gray 2004), to obtain parents viewpoints about SGC services in Tehran's high schools, survey has been conducted.

Sampling

For selecting the parents' participants of the study convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling refers to the collection of information from members of the population who are conveniently available to provide it (Sekaran, 2008).

Deciding the Sample Size

The sample of the study consists of those parents who volunteer to participate in the study. Therefore, 255 parents from 3 districts (6, 7, 18) out of 19 districts of Tehran, considering different social-economic and cultural context of the city, were selected, conveniently, as the sample of the study.

Tool

For the purposes of this study, two methods were used to gather data required to answer the research hypotheses: (a) related literature review, (b) self-developed survey instruments.

For this purpose, a questionnaires were developed by the researcher in order to address the research hypotheses and to study the relations of number of variables, 1- Personal-Social, 2- Educational, 3- Vocational, 4- Familiarity, 5-Attitude

Validity of the tool

To assess the content validity of the questionnaires, two procedures were used: (1) a group of experts was asked to review the questionnaires and provide feedback on content

relevance and clarity,2) a pilot test of instrument was administered to 10% of participants similar to those who participated in the study.

Reliability of the tool

For the purpose of this study, Cronbach Alpha was calculated to ensure reliability of the questionnaires. The calculated Cronbach Alpha is 0.684

Data analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

Tools for Data Analysis

Data collected through the questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 19 and EXCEL. The following statistics was used to analyze the data:

- By use of descriptive statistics, frequencies were tabulated and compared to indicate the parents viewpoints towards SGC services.
- One sample t-test was used to identify the satisfactory of SGC services from the viewpoint of parents.

Observations:

The results of the table No.1 indicates that the calculated Skewness and kurtosis for attitude, and familiarity of the students with SGC services yield between ± 2 , therefore it can be assumed that the distribution of the parents population is approximately normal.

Based on the results of Tables No.2 &No.3 :

Performing One Sample t-Test to investigate the Satisfaction of Counseling Service based on parents Views indicates:

Attitude: The calculated $t(t = 25.595, df= 254, p<0.05)$ towards the SGC services is more than the table value $t(t=1.96, p<0.05)$. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding to the parents positive viewpoints towards SGC services is accepted at the 95% confidence level. In fact it's accepted that based on parents' viewpoints, towards SGC services, in general,are positive.

Educational: The calculated $t(t = 34.427, df= 254, p<0.05)$ for educational SGC services is more than the table value $t(t=1.96, p<0.05)$. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding to the parents' satisfactory towards educational SGC services is accepted at the 95% confidence level. In fact it's accepted that from the views of parents, the educational SGC services are satisfactory.

Personal-Social: The calculated $t(t = 18.571, df= 254, p<0.05)$ for personal-social SGC services is more than the table value $t(t=1.96, p<0.05)$. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding to the

satisfaction personal-social SGC services is accepted at the 95% confidence level. In fact it's accepted that based on parents' viewpoints, the personal-social SGC services are satisfactory.

Vocational: The calculated $t(t = 21.243, df= 254, p<0.05)$ for vocational SGC services is more than the table value $t(t=1.96, p<0.05)$. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding to the parents' satisfactory of vocational SGC services is accepted at the 95% confidence level. In fact it's accepted that based on the parents' viewpoints, the vocational SGC services are satisfactory.

Table No.4 reflects the parents' responses on the question "in your view, counselor full-time presence in high school is necessary?" More than 90% emphasized on the necessity of counselors' full-time presence in high school.

Table No.5 reflects the parents' responses on the question "do u think guidance & counseling program in high school is necessary?" More than 90% emphasized on the necessity of guidance and counseling program in high school.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results of the all observations above shows Parents attitude towards current SGC services is positive and more than 90% of them, also emphasis on the necessity of the guidance and counseling program in high schools and full-time presence of counselors in high schools. These findings are in a remarkable alignment with the few numbers of previous research: Moshkbid Haghighi, 1995, SorourMojgan, 1980, Atyabi, 1979, has also found that 88% of students and 92% of teachers emphasized on the necessity of counselor presence and SGC services. Based on the finding of the two theses authors (Quast, 2003; Stokes, 1997), it would appear parents in these school districts studies felt elementary and high school counselors provided services essential to their child(ren)'s school success.

Table No.1 Descriptive Statistics of Parents' Attitude Towards SGC services

		Attitude	Educational	Personal-Social	Vocational
N	Valid	255	255	255	255
Mean		1.0431	1.2024	1.3613	1.3490
Std. Error		.03739	.02314	.03439	.03064
Std.		.59699	.36950	.54917	.48936
Variance		.356	.137	.302	.239
Skewness		-.014	-.587	-1.078	-1.076
Std. Error		.153	.153	.153	.153
Kurtosis		-.176	.505	.209	.592

Std.Error	.304	.304	.304	.304
Range	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Sum	266.00	306.60	347.14	344.00

Table No. 2 One Sample t-Test Parents' Attitude Towards SGC services:

One-Sample Statistics					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std.	Error
Attitude	255	1.0431	.59699	.03739	
Educational	255	1.2024	.36950	.02314	
Personal-SocialAdjustment	255	1.3613	.54917	.03439	
Vocational	255	1.3490	.48936	.03064	

Table No.3 One Sample t-Test

One-Sample Test							
	Test Value = 2						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Lower	Confidence Upper	
Attitude-	-25.595	245	.000	-.95686	-1.0305	-.8832	
Educational	-34.472	254	.000	-.79765	-.8432	-.7521	
Personal-Social	-18.571	254	.000	-.63866	-.7064	-.5709	
Vocational	-21.243	254	.000	-.65098	-.7113	-.5906	

Table No.4 Necessity of Counselor Presence in High School

In your opinion, counselor full-time presence in high school is necessary?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
Valid	No Answer	9	3.5	3.5	3.5
	that's very good	157	61.6	61.6	65.1
	that's good	67	26.3	26.3	91.4
	sometimes	19	7.5	7.5	98.8
	that's not needed	3	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

Table No.5 Necessity of Counseling Programs in High School

Do you think guidance & counseling program in high school is necessary?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative
Valid	No Answer	8	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Sohcum	183	71.8	71.8	74.9
	Much	58	22.7	22.7	97.6
	A Little	5	2.0	2.0	99.6
	Somewhat	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

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