Guidance and Counseling for Science Students: a Need Assessment

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Abstract
Human beings have always been in search for seeking guidance to solve the problems of their lives. The study was intended to find out the need assessment regarding guidance and counseling for science students at secondary level. This study signifies the need of guidance and counseling for the students according to their mental capabilities. Population of the study was the science students, their parents and science teachers at government secondary and higher secondary schools. Nine hundred students, their parents and ninety teachers were taken randomly as sample of the study. Three questionnaires were used as research instrument for the collection of data from the students, their parents and teachers. Data was arranged, tabulated and then analyzed by applying appropriate statistical tools. The results of the study revealed that there was no guidance and counseling program at the secondary level in schools for science students regarding their educational as well as personal problems.

Keywords: Guidance, Counseling, Administration, Science Education

1. Introduction
Career counseling plays an important role in school system focusing on needs and interests of individuals. But in Pakistan the concept of guidance and counseling is in rudimentary stage. The scenario is quite opposite in developed countries wherein educational and career counseling is at full thrust, the students get benefit out of it. There are many reasons for the lack of guidance and counseling facilities in Pakistan such as law and order situation, inflation and political unrest.

In Pakistan, educational counseling is a new idea. Only few educational institutions offer counseling services to students that too at university levels. People of Pakistan are aware of the significance of higher education. They know that quality education is a key to success. In fact, universities in are not enough to cater the growing population demands and many of youth population unable to achieve their goals. Therefore most of our talent remains unexplored and unpolished and hence lost.

The enrolment in higher education is only 26%, even in this most of the students have no precise choice. The remaining 74% do not reach higher education and lack of guidance is the main reason. Due to unavailability of guidance, 250,000 students approximately suffer every year. About 41,000 students take entry test for medical colleges but only 5,000 succeed. 150,000+ students of other subjects face difficulties in the selection of fields for them. Career guidance becomes need of the hour for the youth of Pakistan. Guidance and counseling must originate from the schools. The teachers need to be educated and trained for this purpose.

In Pakistan mostly parents decide the study programs for their children themselves and they do not decide it according to the interests and skills of their children.
Students are also not able to decide their own field of study because of unawareness about their own personality traits and hidden talents. In this scenario, career counseling in Pakistan assumes greater importance and is the requirement for the development of the country. There are lots of areas for which students require guidance. In the schools, colleges and universities most of the students are very much desperate about their future. There is huge number of students who don't know about their destination and they are moving ahead and struggling without any career destination in their mind.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Researches revealed that students are facing problems regarding guidance & counselling. Therefore, the study was designed to find out whether there is need for guidance and counseling for science students at secondary level in Pakistan.

1.2 Objectives of the Study
• To find out the opinions of teachers regarding need of Guidance & Counseling of Science Students.
• To explore the opinions of Science students regarding need of Guidance & Counseling.
• To find out the opinion of parents regarding Guidance & Counseling of their children.
• To find out the need of Guidance & Counseling in the selection of Science Subjects at Secondary Level.

1.3 Research Questions
• What are the opinions of parents regarding the needs of guidance and counseling of their children at Secondary Level?
• What are the opinions of teachers regarding the needs of guidance and counseling of science students at Secondary Level?
• What are the opinions of science students regarding the needs of guidance and counseling at Secondary Level?
• Is there any proper provision for guidance & counseling of Science Students?

1.4 Delimitations
The study was delimited only to Science Students at Secondary Level & Higher Secondary Schools of Faisalabad City, Pakistan.

2. Related Literature
2.1 Guidance
The root word of guidance is “guide”. Literary meanings of guidance are “to direct”, “to point out or to show the path”. It is used in the meanings of provision of assistance, aid, or information by a more experienced person to a less experienced. It is also used in the sense of steering a person’s thought or action in the right direction by helping him or her to identify what is right and appropriate direction to solve his or her problems. According to a definition by UNESCO guidance can be defined as a process, developmental in nature, by which an individual is assisted to understand, accept and use his/her abilities, aptitudes and interests and attitudinal patterns, in relation to his/her aspirations. Guidance as an educational construct involves those experiences that assists each learner to understand him/her, and live effectively in his/her society.

This definition describes guidance as a continuous process which helps an overall development of an individual rather than a onetime event. Guidance is a concept as well as a process. As a concept guidance is concerned with the optimal development of the individual. As a process guidance helps the individual in self-understanding (understanding one's strengths, limitations, and other resources) and in self-direction (ability to solve problems, make choices and decision on one’s own). Guidance helps the individuals to understand their problems and to realize their potentials and weaknesses and to think rationally to solve their problems. Lack of guidance can lead an individual to inappropriate thought culminating in wrong behavior, and maladjustment.

Kinra5 has analyzed the various definitions of guidance given in the literature and has given the following definition of guidance based on analysis. “Guidance is an integrated, organized and creative process which is useful and applicable to all spheres of life.” He has further described it as a process which is aimed at to make development, to help the individual in solving his/her problems. He further elaborates the function of guidance and states that guidance helps a person in actualization of his/her personality.

Barki and Mukhopadhyay2 define guidance as a process of helping students to choose the subjects or courses of study of their interest and needs. They further elaborated that the role of guidance is also to help learners
to tap their potential to the maximum using available resources and facilities.

2.2 Educational Guidance

Educational guidance can be distinguished from any other form of guidance as it is related with the provision of assistance to pupils in their choices, adjustment, the curriculum and school life in general. Guiding young people to pursue the right type of education is necessary while ensuring that the right balance is maintained in order to meet the human resource needs of a nation\(^8\).

Globalization and development of knowledge in all fields has opened a variety of avenues for the youth for the selection of their future careers. This explosion of knowledge could be confusing and misleading for the youth. Guidance has become essential and should be an integral part of educational system\(^2^4\). Research has revealed that attitude has a positive relationship with achievements. It is therefore essential to help students develop right attitudes by encouraging them to engage in purposeful activities and to adopt healthy hobbies. At school level, guidance can be helpful for the students in the development of right attitudes towards school and studies. Wango\(^7\) (2006) has mentioned that major aim of guidance is to reduce drop out particularly among female students. He has also mentioned that important purpose of education is to manage discipline issues and provide guidance in health related problems.

2.3 Counseling

Provision of consultation, discussion, exchange of views with the purpose of solving a problem or finding right direction through discussion is termed as ‘counseling’\(^7\). This definition reveals that counseling is not one way and that it is a process of mutual help. According to Hughes and Kinder\(^4\), the definition of counseling as given by the British Association of Counseling and Psychotherapy (BACP), “Counseling takes place when a counselor sees a client in private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty client is having, distress they may be experiencing or perhaps their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of sense of direction and purpose. It is always at the request of client as no one can be properly sent for counseling. By listening attentively and patiently the counselor can begin to perceive the difficulty from client’s point of view and can help to see things more clearly perhaps from a different perspective”\(^1\).

3. Research Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature.

3.1 Population

Population of the study was all science students of Secondary Classes at Govt. Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools, their parents and science teachers in Faisalabad City. There are hundred and nineteen (119) Govt. Secondary Schools for boys and girls in district Faisalabad.

3.2 Sample

To get data, 15% of the total Govt. Schools (population) were selected randomly. Stratified Random Sampling technique was used for this purpose. For the selection of the students Convenient Sampling was used. Fifty students of each school of the sample were taken to get data. The purposive sampling was used to select the parents of the students to get data. Five science teachers from each school were selected randomly.

3.3 Research Instrument

Three questionnaires were developed as research tools for students, their parents and teachers. There were nineteen items in each questionnaire to find out the opinion of the students, involvement of their parents and the opinion of teachers regarding needs of Guidance and Counseling at Secondary Level. Validity of the tool was ensured by experts’ opinion. The responses were measured on five point Likert Scale.

4. Presentation and Analysis of Data

The results of responses of the science students, their parents and science teachers have been given in the form of percentage and their mean is also calculated.

Table 1 shows the opinion of students and parents about the need of Guidance in science subjects at school. The mean score of parents’ opinion (4.70) shows the need of Guidance services in science subjects at school. Seventy seven percent parents strongly agree and nineteen percent agree that their children need guidance and help in science subjects at school.

Table 2 shows the opinion of teachers about the provision of Guidance to students at schools. The mean score
of teachers’ opinion (4.78) shows their opinion that they are in the favor of providing guide line and help to the students in science subjects at school. Seventy eight percent teachers strongly agree and twenty two percent agree that there must be a provision of guide line and help to the students in science subjects at school.

Table 3 shows the opinion of students, parents and teachers about the need of guidance for the solution of the students’ problems. The mean score of students 4.6 shows that students really need the guidance for the solution of their problems.

Table 4 shows the need for proper help for the enhancement of academic achievement in science subjects. The mean score of teachers’ opinion (4.70) shows that they were of the opinion that there is need of proper help to students to enhance their academic achievement in science subjects.

Table 5 shows the provision of guidance for decision making in the selection of subjects according to their ability. The mean score of student’s opinion (4.57) shows that they are in the favor of providing guidance to students so that students can may take decision to select subjects according to their ability.

Table 6 shows the opinion of teachers for the provision of help and guide line for science students about experiment before entering laboratory. The mean score of student’s responses show that there is no provision of help and guide line about experiments whereas teachers’ opinion (4.69) shows that they provide help and guide line about experiment before entering laboratory to science students. Seventy two percent teachers strongly agree and twenty five percent agree to this statement.

Table 7 shows the opinion of all respondents about need, provision and of guidance and counseling of sci-
ence students at secondary level. The majority of all respondents agree that science students need guidance and counseling at secondary level, they also agree for its provision and importance.

Table 8 shows the opinion of parents about guidance and counseling of their children. Sixty five percent parents think that they are unable to provide guidance and counseling to their children at secondary level.

5. Findings

It was found that 97% students need help and guide line in science subjects at school 98% students agree that proper guideline is important for the students’ success in science subjects. 88% students agree that proper guide line and help should be provided to them for science subjects. 96% students agree that proper guideline and help should be provided to them for the selection of science subjects. 94% students need help and guidance about theory and practical in science subjects, 70% parents think that they cannot provide help and guidance to their children about theory and practical in science subjects. Ninety two percent parents agree that their children should be provided proper guide line about using science laboratory. It was found that 65% parents cannot provide guidance and counselling to their children at secondary level.

6. Conclusion

Through guidance and counselling program in schools various positive changes can be brought like awareness of many educational and social issues. Guidance and counselling process can be practically applied in schools to get better educational, personal and social outcomes of the learners. In Pakistan such programs may be made to bring useful modification in the cognitive perceptions of our youth, because alterations in behaviour always come out from healthy mental abilities which create productive societies. There is no arrangement of providing guidance and counselling facility in the schools. So there are no committees for this purpose at schools. Results show that available informal guidance and counselling facilities do not fulfil true needs of the learners. The science students need proper help and guideline in the form of formal guidance and counselling programme at secondary level. The science students need proper guide line and help about science theory and experiments. The results also show that science experiments and performance of science students in the science laboratory are not given importance and these things are being neglected.

7. Recommendations

1. It is recommended that school administration may prepare a suitable program of guidance and counseling for science students at school.
2. Proper or formal guidance and counselling facility may be planned and expanded to solve the problems of science students.
3. Formal guidance and counselling services may be made possible only through well-arranged and awareness programs.

8. References

1. BACP. Guidelines for counseling in schools. 2006; Available from: http://www.bacp.co.uk/education/whatiscounselling.html