



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### HEALING THE SOUL WOUND THROUGH COUNSELING CENTRES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (A STUDY)

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#### ABSTRACT

Many people today are apprehensive about sharing their deep feelings with someone and do not find someone to confide their secrets in, here the role of a counselor fulfils such demands. A counselor hears all the problems, thoughts, feelings of his/her subject, finds out his/her solution and do not judge them on any account. This is what makes one feel more comfortable and establishes a relation with the counselor. Guidance and counseling are important for children, and colleges have a huge role in bringing out the best in children. Counseling is a very commonly used term in India. How it is being used and for what, is a matter of discussion. This aspect is extremely important to understand the status of therapeutic / psychological / clinical counseling in India. The major objective of counseling is to help individuals become self sufficient, self dependent, self directed and to adjust themselves efficiently to the demands of a better and meaningful life. Individuals are provided assistance to enhance their personal, social, emotional and intellectual development. Therefore the counselor's services are preventive, developmental and therapeutic in nature

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#### INTRODUCTION

Counseling is defined as an interactive process conjoining the counselee who needs assistance and the counselor who is trained and educated to give this assistance (Perez, 1965). Smith (1995) defines counseling as a process in which the counselor assists the counselee to make interpretations of facts relating to a choice, plan, or adjustments which he needs to make. Counseling is also defined as a process which takes place in a one to one relationship between an individual beset by problems with which he cannot cope alone and a professional worker whose training and experience have qualified him to help others reach solutions to various types of personal difficulties (Hahn and MacLean, 1955). Effective counseling consists of a definitely structured permissive relationship which allows the client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him to take positive steps in the light of his new orientation.

#### Counseling in India

Goa in India is a small state where the local people believe in spirits and superstitions. The counselor needs to understand their belief system and work through the same while providing suggestions and interventions.

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Mumbai, a metropolitan city, individuals here are used to travelling and hence have no inhibitions travelling for one hour to reach a counselor but are extremely rigid with regard to time as their schedules go by the timings of the local trains and they can become extremely non receptive if the timing is not given importance. Chennai in south, is very flexible with regard to time but very closed and hence acceptance of a counselor from the northern states may be difficult for a local. In any city in India, counseling of children and adolescents will mostly have to include the parents too (unlike in the West) as here, parents have an active role in the life of their children. Even in college, many a parent visit the counselor along with the student even though he / she may legally be an adult. India is also a country where many complimentary therapies and healing systems are very popular.

#### Need for counseling centres in educational institutions

The Centre addresses the needs and problems of the students at their intrapersonal, interpersonal and social levels. Contrary to the belief that counseling is only for the severely mentally disturbed people, it is also to help the students deal with day to day problems, issues, crises and trauma. Some of the common issues are problems in studies like lack of concentration, inattentivity, absentism, memory, exam fear, adjustments, coping skills, decision making, self confidence, self esteem, self worth, assertiveness, anxiety, extreme fears, obsessions, depressions, suicidal intention, confusions, addictions of

various types, handling relationships in personal and family life, social initiation, motivation and enrichment. The various activity of the centre like one to one counseling, group counseling, workshop programs, trainings and seminars are designed to help the students to get awareness, learn coping skills and all around development towards positive mental health.

### Important Qualities of a Counselor

The various qualities of a good counselor are

- Non-judgemental
- Active listener
- Shows acceptance
- Shows unconditional positive regard
- Client-centered
- Empathetic

### Do's and Dont's – Counselor

Counselors Should Do	Counselors Should Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept client's feelings</li> <li>• Use language that client understands</li> <li>• Recognise client potential</li> <li>• Maintain confidentiality</li> <li>• Be respectful and caring</li> <li>• Be genuine</li> <li>• Identify with the client's feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judging or blaming</li> <li>• Moralising, preaching, or patronising</li> <li>• Giving advice instead of suggestions</li> <li>• Negating client's concerns</li> <li>• Attempting to deceive</li> <li>• Interrogating</li> <li>• Looking bored/distracted/disinterested</li> <li>• Laughing at (not with) the client</li> <li>• Imposing your own values</li> <li>• Encouraging dependence</li> </ul>

### Review of Literature

- Greg Brigman and Chari Campbell (2003) conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling in schools which focused on group counseling and class room guidance using a student success skills model that had been developed based on various reviews of research. The study was conducted for a period of two years and aimed to determine if school counselor led interventions had a positive impact on student achievement and school success behaviours. The results revealed that student counselor led intervention combined with class room guidance had a positive impact on students achievement and behavior.
- Robert JPetrella (2002), conducted a study to determine the effect of counseling patients to become more physically active. They discovered that interventions were effective at increasing levels of physical activity but also were faced with the question regarding the cost effectiveness of the counseling program as many a time they felt the steps taken to make the patients physically active proved to be much costlier than what the patients were when they were not in to physical activity.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

- To find out the need for counseling centre in educational institutions.
- To analyze the role of counselor in helping the students.

- To know the respondents opinion on the attitude towards establishment of the counseling centre.
- To find out the satisfaction level of the respondents towards these counseling centre.

### Statement of the Problem

A young girl who has broken away from abusive relationship seeks the help of her college counselor to overcome the emotional trauma resulting from the abuse. This comes in as a remediation. But such a trauma may be avoided if individuals seek preventive help. Students, most of the time, both in school and college seek counseling services only as remedial therapy. But counseling as a profession is still in its nascent stage in India. The common man is yet to understand the concept of approaching a professional to sort out his problems. There is still a lot of confusion as to what is counseling; why it is a paid service; why only certain individuals are considered eligible for the profession. The confusion is increased by the term counseling being used in various contexts. Students who are being admitted to colleges have "counseling". This session is simply an interview for checking documents and allocation of stream. This made the researcher to find the actual implementation and its adverse effect of counseling in educational institutions.

### Scope of the Study

Many educational institutions expect the special educators to play the role of a counselor. There are still other schools that simply appoint an experienced teacher as a counselor. This is because of a poor awareness about counseling as an intervention which requires a specific education and practice to obtain desired results. In most official set ups, counseling is merely considered "talking" and as a result neither is the professional appreciated nor are the interventions given importance. It is also important that the functions of counselors are clearly defined in educational settings. Most counselors are given extra duties and duties involving public relation activities. This reduces the time they spend with children in school and reduces opportunities for children to approach the counselor. Many a time, educational institution counseling sessions are used to convince the parents / student that he / she needs to change the school because of the child's poor performance. Referral to a counseling session is generally used as a threat to students with bad behavior as a result of which the student does not perceive the counselor. Hence the researcher has made an attempt to find out the need and its effect of establishing counseling centers in educational institution.

### Research Design and Sample Size

The researcher has adopted a Non-probability Sampling Technique in order to select the sample from a relatively large population framework in each organization. Samples were selected by using judgment sampling procedure – that is, using researcher's judgment in administering the questionnaire and conducting personal interview with only those respondents who can spare time for filling the survey. Therefore the researcher selected 175 as her sample size. The sample respondents are students of selective colleges in Madurai.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study are given below

- How many counseling session have you attended?

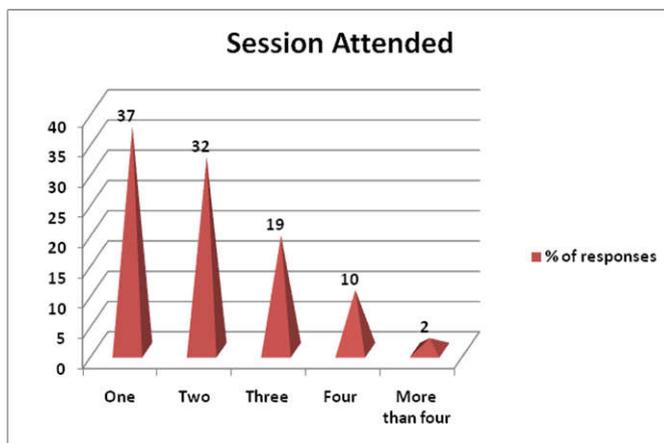
**Table 1. Counseling Session Attended**

S.No	Session attended	No. of respondents	% of responses
1	One	64	37
2	Two	56	32
3	Three	34	19
4	Four	18	10
5	More than four	3	2
	Total	175	100

Source: Primary Data

### Inference

It is evident from the above Table 1.1 that, 37% of the respondents have attended one session of counseling, 32% of them have attended twice, 19% of them have attended thrice, 10% of them have attended four times and only 2% of them have attended more than four times. The above data is represented in the following Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1. Counseling Session Attended**

### Garrett's Ranking Technique

To find out the most significant factor which influences the respondent, Garrett's ranking technique was used. As per this method, respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all factors and the outcome of such ranking has been converted into score value with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where

$R_{ij}$  = Rank given for the  $i$  th variable by  $j$  th respondents

$N_j$  = Number of variable ranked by  $j$  th respondents

With the help of Garrett's Table, the percent position estimated is converted into scores. Then for each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean values of score is calculated. The factors having highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor.

### Respondent's Opinion on Counselor

The opinion of the respondents on counselor is analyzed with the help of Garrett ranking. The results are given below.

### Inference

Table 1.2(b) highlights Garrett scores which help to decide the most important factor that makes the respondents to opine about their opinion on their counselor. According to Garrett ranking, among the eight factors 'counselor is knowledgeable about services to be rendered to students' ranks first with a mean score of 56.25, 'Counselor is available to me when I have problems' ranks second with a mean score of 54.06, 'I will recommend my friends speak with my counselor if there were social or emotional problems' ranks third with a mean score of 52.31, 'Guidance in internet / social media safety' ranks fourth with a mean score of 52.07, followed by 'Counseled on suicide prevention', 'Recommend my counselor

**Table 1.2A. Calculation of Total score**

S. No	Opinion on counselor	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
1	I will recommend my friends speak with my counselor if there were social or emotional problems	880	2516	1260	2014	987	574	672	252	9155
2	Guidance in internet / social media safety	2960	544	900	1431	1833	492	512	441	9113
3	Recommend my counselor to other relatives and outsiders	3040	748	540	318	517	1640	640	840	8283
4	Able to fix schedules and meet at reasonable time	640	2312	960	848	987	287	1440	588	8062
5	Is available to me when I have problems	1680	1292	3060	1431	329	861	576	231	9460
6	Experience of your prior meeting with your counselor	800	476	1980	848	752	1722	1152	315	8045
7	Is knowledgeable about services to be rendered to students	3120	1428	540	2067	1833	369	256	231	9844
8	Counseled on suicide prevention	880	2584	1260	318	987	1230	352	777	8388

Source: Primary Data

**Table 1.2b. Garrett Ranking**

S. No	Opinion on Counselor	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	I will recommend my friends speak with my counselor if there were social or emotional problems	9155	52.31	III
2	Guidance in internet / social media safety	9113	52.07	IV
3	Recommend my counselor to other relatives and outsiders	8283	47.33	VI
4	Able to fix schedules and meet at reasonable time	8062	46.07	VII
5	Is available to me when I have problems	9460	54.06	II
6	Experience of your prior meeting with your counselor	8045	45.97	VIII
7	Is knowledgeable about services to be rendered to students	9844	56.25	I
8	Counseled on suicide prevention	8388	47.93	V

Source: Computed Data

to other relatives and outsiders', 'Able to fix schedules and meet at reasonable time', and 'Experience of your prior meeting with your counselor' with mean score of 47.93, 47.33, 46.07 and 45.97 respectively.

### Mention the highlights in your college counseling center

**Table 1.3. Highlights of the Counseling centre**

S.No	Highlights	No. responses	% of responses
1	Confidential room	52	23
2	Positive quotes	43	19
3	Sound system	35	16
4	Charts	21	9
5	Pleasant atmosphere	48	22
6	Pictorial representation	24	11
	Total	223	100

Source: Primary Data

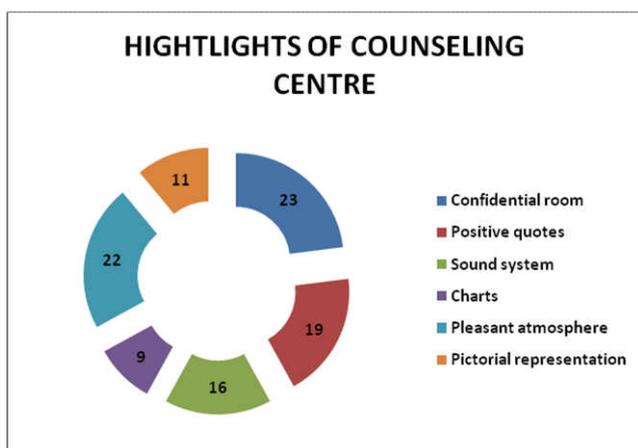
**Table 1.4. Opinion on counseling centre**

S.No	Opinion	SA	A	NO	DA	SDA	Likert's score	Rank
1	I felt comfortable in the waiting room	495	252	21	8	2	778	III
2	I was treated courtesely	605	200	9	2	0	816	I
3	I feel more hopeful about my future	470	248	42	6	2	768	IV
4	I feel comfortable going to my counseling centers	390	272	60	8	5	735	VI
5	I believe that I will perform better academically	425	284	36	14	0	759	V
6	I feel better about myself	565	200	18	8	2	793	II
7	I feel comfortable seeking help from my counselor	355	304	51	22	0	732	VII
8	There were too many forms to fill out	485	124	81	26	7	723	VIII

Source: Primary data

### Inference

As the respondents have chosen more than one option, the total number of responses is more than the actual responses. It is vivid from the above Table 1.3 that, 23% of the respondents opined that, their counseling centre is more confidential, 22% of their opined that there is pleasant atmosphere in their counseling centre, 19% for its positive quotes, 16% for their sound system, 11% for pictorial representation and 9% for its chart representation. The above data is represented in the following Figure 1.2



**Figure 1.2. Highlights of the counseling centre**

### Likerts scaling Technique

### Inference

From the analysis it is found from the Table 1.4 that, the respondents opined that, 'I was treated courtesely' which occupies the first rank. The second rank goes to 'I feel better about myself', the third rank goes to 'I felt comfortable in the

waiting room', the fourth rank goes to 'I feel more hopeful about my future' and the fifth rank goes to 'I believe that I will perform better academically'.

### Limitations

- Getting permission from the educational institution was more difficult.
- Time permitted for meeting the respondents was too short.
- The respondents were reluctant to respond.

### Scope for Further Research

The researcher has done the research with reference to need for counseling centers at various colleges in Madurai, hence  
 oA new research can be conducted among the beneficiaries of counseling.

- Research on the various techniques adopted by the counselor can be studied.
- Attitude of the counselors towards the functions of educational institution can be made.

### Conclusion

Indian counselors require to opt for certain quantitative assessment tools to supplement their diagnosis. Counseling is a specialized profession which involves introduction of various interventions and the effectiveness and success of the same lies in the receptivity and usage by the client. In such cases, evaluation of success of this work becomes difficult. The techniques followed here need to be adapted to the culture and belief system of the mind set of people here. Students express a comfort zone if the counselor belongs to the same geographical region and or speaks the same language. Many students approach the counselor whom they are able to relate to as a mother figure. Counseling in India needs a facelift and the same may be achieved by promoting the same in a scientific manner for which a lot of research needs to be conducted in that field. It also needs to be authenticated by a regulating

body. Simultaneously; the profession needs to be developed in a more structured manner with certain quantifiable specifications that will be able to project the diagnosis and interventions in a more tangible manner. Counselors also need to involve in active public education and awareness regarding the importance of maintaining positive mental health and take practical steps to help the clients overcome the avoidance behavior and seek help.

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