



Indian Students' Attitude towards Guidance and Counseling

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Abstract: *The aim of the study was to measure attitude of school students towards guidance and counseling and to find if age and gender are significant determinant of attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help. The study was conducted on 103 students (51 males and 52 females) . An adaptive version of Attitude Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPHS) was used which consists of 30 items. The study found that students had a positive attitude towards seeking guidance and counseling services. Gender and age did not play a significant role in attitude towards seeking guidance and counseling services*

Key Words: *Attitude ,Guidance and counseling, Bhagwad Gita, self confidence.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Wikipedia lays out that counseling and guidance principles began with the philosophical teachings of Plato and Aristotle in ancient Greece and Rome, But as we dig deeper into Ancient Indian literature, more specifically Bhagwad Gita, we realize that besides teaching mankind, through Arjuna, the meaning of life & death and self-realization, Krishna acted as an incomparable counselor for Arjuna, removing all his doubts and conflicts through his finest principles of counseling for people of all lands, all ages and all times.

Thus, one can note that Indians were the first to advocate counseling and the concept did not develop in India as a result of western influences. However, the western world was the first to recognize its importance and utilize it in educational settings as a recognized professional service.

In 1915, Calcutta University started the first psychological laboratory in India where guidance was introduced as a section of its department of applied psychology as an academic discipline in 1938 under the direction of Dr. G.S. Bose

In 1941, Bombay University, Baltiboi Vocational Guidance Bureau was established.

In 1954, the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance, now a part of the National Council of Educational Research and Training, was set up by the Ministry of Education, Central Government of India which has been rendering valuable service ever since it was established in the field of guidance [1]

Counseling is a process that deals with emotional, social, work, school, and physical health concerns people may have at different stages in their lives, focusing on typical life stresses and more severe issues with which people may struggle as individuals and as a part of families, groups and organization [2]

Guidance can be explained as assistance made available by competent counselors to an individual of any group to help him/her direct the life course, develop a point of view, make decisions, and be better adjusted. Guidance is more about assisting people to find their way rather than giving instructions or ready-made solutions [3]

The adolescent years are a transitional period. There are several ups and downs, stress, and strain during this period. Throughout the developmental span of human life, adolescence and young adulthood are very crucial stages. During this time, individuals can either be shaped and molded into an asset or, at the other extreme, rendered useless and redundant, turning into a liability for the nation. There are various challenges they face at this stage, for which guidance is needed.

As they grow and develop, they encounter several issues related to different aspects of life, including education, family life, social life, future prospects, financial issues, and religious concerns.

According to the National Mental Health Survey, 2015-16, the prevalence of mental illness was nearly 7 percent for those aged 13 - 17 years, and was nearly equal for both sexes. There were 2.6% cases of depressive episodes & recurrent depressive disorders, 2.3% cases of agoraphobia, 1.7% of intellectual disabilities, 1.6% of phobic anxiety



disorders, and 1.3% of psychotic disorders. Researchers in Himachal Pradesh studied adolescents aged 15-24 and found that they suffered from a wide range of mental health conditions such as anxiety (15.5%), depression (6.9%), tobacco (7.6%), alcohol (7.2%), and suicidal ideation (5.5%), resulting in the need for urgent interventions (82). There is no disputing the fact that it affects their growth, development, education, and social interaction day-to-day, but if left unattended, it can lead to lifelong consequences.[4]

PROPER USE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICE CAN HELP A STUDENT IN 3 WAYS

Adjustment Function:

In guidance and counseling, students are provided individualized aid to help them make the most appropriate adjustments to their current situation in the educational setting, in their occupation, at home, and in their communities.

Orientalional Function:

Students are guided towards long-term personal goals by orienting them in career planning, and educational programming, since planning, is an important part of preparing for future education and career.

Developmental Function:

Counseling and guidance act as tools to help students achieve self-realization and develop their potential. They play an important function of advancing social welfare as well as being an instrument for developing a nation[5]

An attitude can be defined as a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, person, object, or situation [6]

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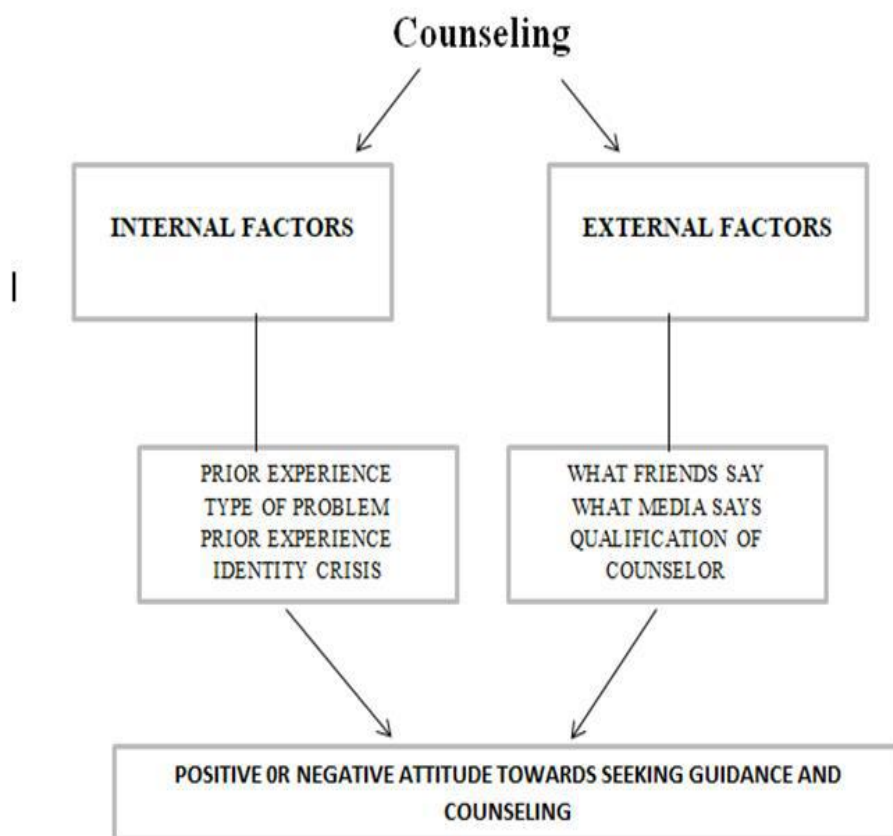


Figure 1

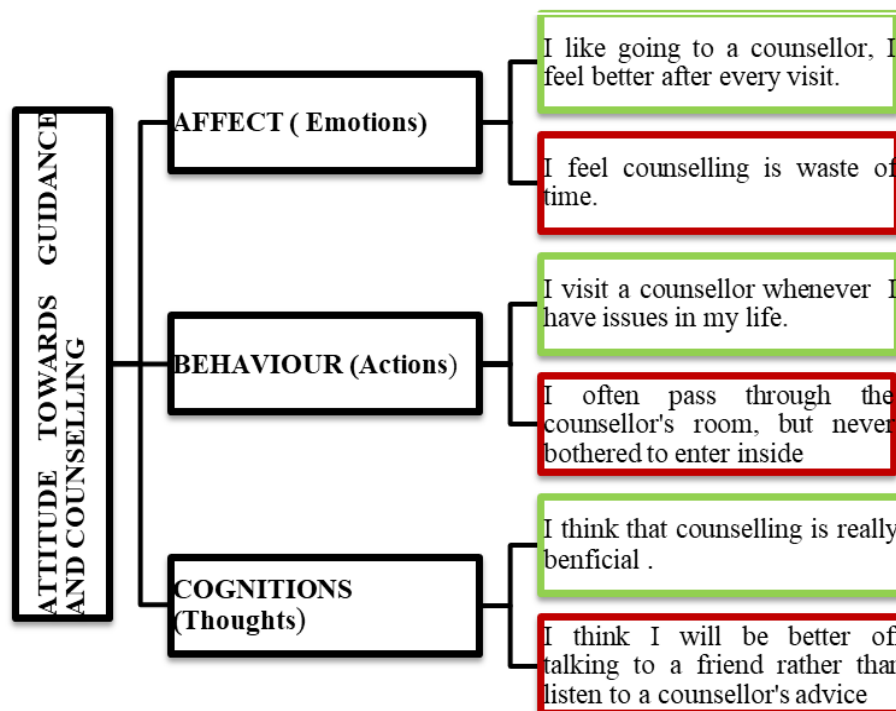


Figure 2

Attitudes of counselees towards guidance and counseling may indicate their willingness to accept, patronize, or use counseling services. Counseling cannot create any positive change without students' acceptance, patronization, and usage of the service. Counseling when appropriately adapted has the potential to moderate student issues, which are seen largely as manifestations of misunderstood identities, confusion of self, and maladaptation of personality [7] .

Well-adjusted students provide a more suitable environment for learning and teaching. Nonetheless, school counseling as a strategy for moderating students' behavior has a great deal to do with how students perceive it and the reaction it invokes. Even though its importance for individual and national development has long since been recognized, little research has been conducted on students' perceptions of and attitudes toward this special educational service.

Without an understanding of the prevailing attitudes and prejudices students have towards him and his programs, a school counselor will fail to reap much from his endeavors, since success is critically dependent on the level of awareness of the counselees. This perspective has greatly influenced the motivation to conduct this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Anuja S. Panicker, M. Samskani (2019) conducted a research to explore the attitude of attitudes towards counselling among medical students in India. During the study, it was discovered that 50% of the participants felt they needed counselling for themselves and for their friends. 75% of the participants also felt they could relieve mild stress by reaching out to counsellors for help. [8]

Awabiland Akosah, (2018) discovered a favourable attitude amongst university students in Ghana towards guidance and counselling, although they also expressed discomfort about some aspects of counseling [9]

Mwangi and Otanga (2015) investigated the role of guidance and counseling as perceived by students. Study findings revealed that students had a positive perception and appreciation of guidance and counseling services and that their views and attitudes were influenced by information accessed regardless of their gender or year of study.[10]

Agi (2014) examined the effects of sex, class and school division on perception and attitude toward school counseling. The sex of students was not significant in determining how they perceived counseling and how they viewed counseling[11]



Munira Arshad , Naruemon Da-I and Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah (2012) conducted a study to find how age and gender are related to attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help and found that university Indian students had a positive attitude towards seeking counselling. There was no correlation found between age and attitude towards seeking counselling services, however in terms of gender, female JNU students scored higher on the subscales of openness towards seeking counselling help and confidence in mental health provider out of the total 4 subscales of the test used [12]

In their study, Lynass, Pykhtina and Cooper (2012) explored young people's opinions of which aspects of school-based counseling are useful and unhelpful. Their study concluded that that young people viewed counseling as a valuable intervention and brought many positive interpersonal, emotional, and behavioral changes in them[13]

Ogoda (2010)studied the attitudes of students toward guidance and counseling in public schools. He noted the importance of school counseling and highlighted that lack of professionalism on the part of school counselors, lack of a counseling office, lack of a time set for counseling, non availability of the school counselors are the factors that hinder the success of counseling interventions.[14]

Eyo, Mary, Joshu, and Esuong (2010) studied the nature of secondary school students' attitudes toward guidance and counseling services and found that female students displayed more positive attitudes than their male counterparts[15]

Ubana (2008) discovered negative attitudes towards guidance and counselling services among students of secondary schools in Yakurr local government area of Cross River State. Students' gender and the geographic location of the school did not significantly affect the attitudes students' had toward guidance and counseling services [16]

Sandhu, (2000) found that negative attitudes towards guidance and counseling have been explained in the literature as due to the lack of value attached to guidance and counseling from students' own perspective and their ability to solve their own problems or with peers [17]

Denga (1983), studied the attitude students' towards the counselor and found that 100 percent students showed need for counseling and the readiness of the students to go to the counselor for counseling. (Onyejiaku 1991) found that the attitude of males and females to some extent are favorable towards counseling services[18]

An academic study conducted by Musgrove (1973) found no significant differences in attitudes towards guidance and counseling services among male and female high school students, but a positive/favourable overall attitude toward guidance offices[19]

2.1 HPOTHESIS :

Three null hypotheses based on the purpose of the study were postulated and tested during the investigation.

Ho1: The attitude of secondary school students towards guidance and counselling services is not significantly positive.

Ho2: Students' attitude toward guidance and counselling services is not significantly influenced by sex (gender).

Ho3: Attitude of secondary school students toward guidance and counselling services is not significantly influenced by the age of the students.

3. METHODOLOGY :

SAMPLING

The sample for the study included 103 students . The questionnaire was sent to 400 students of two schools out of which 103 students responded and were included for the study. Participants' age ranged from 13 to 18 and above . The majority (88.3 %) of the respondent's ages ranged between 13- 18 years old. Only a small number (11.6%) of the students were above 18 years old.

TOOL USED

Data was collected by the use of a questionnaire developed by MUTINDI PETRONILLA MUTINDA [20]. This attitude scale is an adaptation of the Fischer and Turners' test of Attitudes Towards Seeking Psychological Help (ATSPH, 1970). The scale has 30 items It consists of four parts.



The first section of the questionnaire (Part A) included the description of the purpose of the study, instruction for completing the questionnaire, and request for demographic information, which is, age, sex, and class . Part B of the instrument sought to find out the common personal and academic problems that students experience in schools .

Part C of the questionnaire sought to understand how aware the students were of the guidance counseling services offered in the schools, by asking them questions related to the location and timings of the counseling office, the gender of the counselor, etc.

The last part of the questionnaire (Part D) contained thirty closed questions as mentioned above. These questions measure the attitudes of secondary school students towards seeking guidance and counseling. The reliability coefficient of the adaptation scale which is used in this study was calculated as 0.8922 by the person who adapted it, hence deeming this questionnaire as reliable.

To check the validity of the scale, a pilot study was carried out by the researcher (MUTINDI PETRONILLA MUTINDA). The pilot study helped the researcher to identify items in the research instruments that might have been ambiguous in eliciting the relevant information. These items were discarded or modified to improve the quality of instruments and their validity

4. RESULTS :

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	51	49.5 %
FEMALE	52	50.5 %
TOTAL	103	100 %

Table 1 shows the gender of the respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
BETWEEN 13-15	64	62.2 %
BETWEEN 16 to 18 ABOVE	39	37.8 %
TOTAL	103	100 %

Table 2 shows the age Distribution of the Respondents

CLASS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
8	6	5.8
9	39	37.8
10	22	21.3
11	13	12.6
12	23	22.5
TOTAL	103	100 %

Table 3 shows the class of the Respondents

The attitude of the students was ascertained by determining the maximum and minimum values of the items. The minimum value was 54 while the maximum was 116. The items were then assigned the values to determine those with negative attitudes and those with positive attitudes,

54 – 89	Positive attitude
90 -116	Negative attitude



5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION :

Ho1: The attitude of school students towards guidance and counseling services will not be significantly positive

Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
POSITIVE	78	75.7
NEGATIVE	25	24.3
TOTAL	103	100

Table 4

Above table indicates that majority of the respondents 75.7 % (78) have a positive attitude towards seeking guidance and counselling, while 25.3% (25) of the respondents have a negative attitude towards seeking guidance and counselling. The mean attitude of students is 82.46 with a minimum value of 54 and a maximum value of 116, indicating that students have overall positive attitude towards seeking guidance and counselling.

Ho2: Students’ attitude toward guidance and counseling services will not be significantly influenced by sex (gender).

	No. MALE (51)	No. FEMALE (52)
POSITIVE	38(70%)	40 (76%)
NEGATIVE	13 (25%)	12 (23%)

Table 5

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.261 ^a	1	.609		
Continuity Correction ^b	.081	1	.776		
Likelihood Ratio	.261	1	.609		
Fisher's Exact Test				.655	.388
Linear-by-Linear Association	.259	1	.611		
N of Valid Cases	103				

Table 5.1

The above table shows. the chi-square ($\chi^2 = 0.261$; $df = 1$; p value = 0.609) is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The findings suggest that sex is not a significant determinant of the attitudes towards guiding and counselling. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho3: Attitude of school students toward guidance and counselling services will not be significantly influenced by the age of the students

	13-15 YEARS	16-18 & ABOVE
POSITIVE	48	30
NEGATIVE	16	9

Table 6



	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.078 ^a	1	.781		
Continuity Correction ^b	.002	1	.965		
Likelihood Ratio	.078	1	.780		
Fisher's Exact Test				.819	.487
Linear-by-Linear Association	.077	1	.782		
N of Valid Cases	103				

Table 6.1

The above table shows that the chi-square ($\chi^2 = 0.078$; $df = 1$; p value = 0.781) is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The findings suggest that age is not a significant determinant of the attitudes of students towards guidance and counselling. Hence null hypothesis is accepted.

Common issues experienced by School Students

Issues related to academics and time management	Frequency	Relationship issues	Frequency	Personal issues	Frequency
Recurrent problems in solving assignments	35 (34%)	Domestic problems	15 (14.6%)	Drug and alcoholism	4 (3.8%)
Time management problems	83 (80.6%)	Poor relationship with authority figures	8 (7.8%)	Excessive guilt and worry	50 (48.5%)
Unexplainable fear of failure in exams	34 (33%)	Poor relationship with friends and members of same and opposite sex	23 (22.3%)	Lack of self confidence	43 (41.7%)
Career problems	34 (33%)			Frequent nervousness	32 (31.1%)
				Frequent depression	15 (14.6%)
				Spiritual or religious	7 (6.8%)
				Nervous breakdown	25 (24.3%)



Table 7

The top three most common issues faced by maximum respondents were issues related to time management 80.6 % followed by feelings of excessive guilt and worry 48% and lack of self confidence 41%.

6. CONCLUSION :

According to the findings, students have a favorable attitude towards seeking counseling. The findings suggest that sex and age are not significant determinants of the attitudes of students towards guidance and counselling. The present finding could be due to the impact of a number of changes on family, society, culture, economics, and politics. In particular, India's education sector has flourished. Government and educational initiatives have been rampant, as have mass media and modern communication technologies. In addition, there is growing recognition of the importance of mental health especially during times of covid.

In 2001, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), one of the largest education boards in India made it mandatory to have a trained school counselor in all their schools and laid out that every student at Secondary or Senior Secondary level must receive at least twenty sessions of psychological counseling in an academic year. However the facilities were underutilized due to various stigmas attached to visiting a counselor

A long-overdue conversation about mental health was sparked by Sushant Singh Rajput's death. LiveLoveLaugh, in a follow-up study to a previous one in 2018, 'How India Perceives Mental Health' examined the knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward mental health and reported a substantial jump from last year's 54% to 92%. The surveyed respondents said they would support a person seeking treatment for mental illness in an attitudinal change survey on mental health interventions.

The study also showed a dramatic shift in general perceptions of mental illness, with 65% believing they can work and lead stable, healthy lives - more than double the previous year's 32%. Additionally, 68% believed people with mental illness could form meaningful connections with friends, family, and companions, which is a positive development in a country where misinformation abounds on this topic.[21]

Teenagers have been increasingly using social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

Studies show that 22% of teenagers logged onto their favorite social media site more than ten times a day, and more than half of these adolescents logged on more than once a day[22]. Today internet and cell phones play a significant role in their emotional and social development.

Instagram is incredibly popular among teens, making it a great platform to spread mental health awareness. A campaign on Instagram called #HereForYou brings other stories of people struggling with mental health issues.

Tumblr is currently one of the most popular blogging sites worldwide—it's users are mainly made up of teens to draw attention to Mental Health Awareness Month, they started a campaign called 'Post It Forward' which is meant to help users that are struggling and bring awareness to the true frequency of mental health issues—that they're not rare and many of us have a challenge with mental health at some point in our lives [23]. Several celebrities and influential social media users are promoting body positivity and psychotherapy. In terms of removing stigma attached to counseling and therapy, these factors have played a crucial role.

With everything changing, online guidance and counseling services for teens have turned into digital alternatives, resulting in increased affordability and accessibility for them.

Lifology' is a guidance App for Parents. It provides parents with ultra-personalized advice from experts to prepare their children for the future.

In addition to emotional well-being, they address educational and career development issues. Lifology will help parents make their children future ready by bringing global intelligence to their mobile phones.[24]

"Dost for Life" is a new app launched by CBSE for the psycho-social well-being of students in classes IX-XII. The app shifts the existing practice of providing counseling through toll-free numbers to bringing counseling to students and parents at home in a safe environment. Students can access guidance and therapy from counselors, receive tips on mental health and wellbeing, and get guidance on courses after their graduation. To appeal to younger users, two sections have been included: a rap song section and frequently asked questions.[25]

TeenTherapy provides kids, teens, and parents with certified therapists Parenting and family therapy are also a focal point of their work, along with child development. The child or teenager may undergo online therapy under the consent of the parents or in their presence and receive the much-needed mental and emotional support[26]

Destigmatisation, collaboration of professionals, communities, and government organizations, and increased accessibility and accessibility are steadily contributing to the improvement of guidance and counseling services. The guidance and counseling industry is improving, even though we still have a long way to go.



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