

TRCN

PhD Study Material

on

PQE 005: Guidance & Counselling

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Concept of Guidance & Counselling: Theory & Practice

Guidance and counselling services are essential for promoting the holistic development of individuals in both educational and community settings. These services aim to address the personal, social, educational, and career needs of individuals, helping them make informed decisions and cope with life's challenges.

In schools, guidance services assist students in navigating academic pressures, personal issues, and career planning, while in communities, they provide resources and support for individuals to manage social, family, and professional concerns.

Rationale of Guidance and Counselling Services

1. **Personal Development**

Guidance services help individuals understand themselves better, develop self-awareness, and enhance emotional well-being.

2. **Educational Achievement**

Counselling aids students in maximizing their academic potential by addressing learning difficulties, motivation, and study habits.

3. **Career Planning**

Career counselling helps individuals make informed career choices by aligning their skills, interests, and job opportunities.

4. **Social and Emotional Support**

Counsellors provide support in addressing issues related to family, relationships, and peer interactions.

5. **Preventive Intervention**

Early intervention through counselling helps to prevent academic failure, mental health issues, and social conflicts.

Scope of Guidance and Counselling Services

1. **Educational Settings:** Includes academic advising, career guidance, and personal counselling for students in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.
2. **Community Settings:** Involves support services for individuals facing family, social, or employment-related challenges.
3. **Career Development:** Helping individuals make informed career decisions, transition between jobs, or enhance their professional growth.
4. **Mental Health Services:** Addressing emotional and psychological concerns through therapeutic counselling and intervention programs.

Nature of Guidance and Counselling Services

1. **Comprehensive:** Services cater to all aspects of development—academic, social, emotional, and career.
2. **Individual and Group:** Counselling can be delivered on a one-on-one basis or in group settings to address common issues.
3. **Developmental and Remedial:** Guidance services focus on promoting healthy development and addressing specific issues, such as academic failure or behavioural problems.

4. **Collaborative:** Counsellors often collaborate with teachers, parents, community leaders, and other professionals to ensure the well-being of individuals.

Multiple Approaches to Guidance and Counselling Services

This focuses on addressing the unique needs of individuals through comprehensive support systems.

These services include needs assessment, programme planning, consultation, and coordination, with counsellors playing a central role in each stage.

Needs Assessment:

Counsellors begin by conducting a thorough needs assessment to identify the specific challenges and requirements of individuals or groups. This process involves gathering information through interviews, surveys, observations, and data analysis.

For diverse populations, counsellors take into account factors such as cultural, social, and economic backgrounds to ensure an inclusive and accurate assessment.

Programme Planning:

Once the needs are identified, counsellors take the lead in developing tailored programmes that address these issues. They create strategies to support students or clients, incorporating educational, emotional, and social interventions.

For diverse populations, counsellors ensure that the programmes are culturally sensitive, accessible, and adaptable to various socio-

economic contexts. This may include language support, mentorship initiatives, or targeted skill-building workshops.

Consultation:

Counsellors collaborate with teachers, parents, administrators, and external community resources during the consultation phase. They share their insights and recommendations, ensuring that all stakeholders understand the needs of the individuals and the planned interventions.

For diverse populations, counsellors emphasize the importance of cultural competence and inclusive communication to foster understanding and effective collaboration.

Coordination of Services:

Counsellors also play a critical role in coordinating the delivery of services. This involves ensuring that various support mechanisms—such as psychological services, academic tutoring, or social welfare—are aligned with the needs identified in the assessment.

For diverse populations, counsellors liaise with community organisations, healthcare providers, and social workers to integrate external resources that address cultural or socio-economic challenges.

Problems in Guidance and Counselling

One of the major challenges in guidance and counselling is ***inadequate resources***. Many schools and institutions *lack sufficient funding, trained personnel, and infrastructure* to offer

comprehensive counselling services. This limitation affects the quality of support counsellors can provide to students and clients.

Another problem is **cultural and societal barriers**, especially in diverse communities where stigma surrounding mental health or counselling may prevent individuals from seeking help.

Lack of awareness and **limited access** to counselling services in rural or underserved areas further exacerbate these challenges. Additionally, counsellors often face **high caseloads**, which can result in **burnout** and **reduced effectiveness** in their work.

Issues in Guidance and Counselling

1. **Cultural Competence**: the ability of counsellors to understand and respect the cultural backgrounds of their clients. This is important in multicultural societies, where misunderstandings or lack of sensitivity can create barriers to effective counselling.
2. **Integration of Technology**: especially with the rise of tele-counselling and online support systems. While this offers greater access to services, it also raises concerns about maintaining confidentiality and establishing meaningful client-counsellor relationships.
3. **Confidentiality**: counsellors must navigate the balance between keeping client information private and reporting issues that may require intervention, such as abuse or self-harm.

Trends in Guidance and Counselling

In recent years, there has been a growing trend towards holistic counselling approaches. This involves considering not just the emotional or psychological well-being of clients, but also their physical, social, and spiritual health.

Trauma-informed counselling is also gaining prominence, as counsellors recognise the long-term impacts of trauma on individuals and incorporate strategies to create safe, supportive environments for healing.

Another trend is the increasing focus on **career counselling** and **life coaching**, as individuals seek guidance on personal development and navigating professional challenges.

Group counselling and **peer counselling** programmes are also emerging as cost-effective ways to support large populations, particularly in educational settings.

Ethical Responsibility in Guidance and Counselling:

Ethics play a foundational role in guidance and counselling, as counsellors are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and care.

Confidentiality remains a core ethical responsibility, requiring counsellors to protect client information while balancing their duty to intervene when safety is at risk.

Counsellors must also ensure **informed consent**, making sure clients understand the nature of the counselling process, their rights, and any potential risks involved.

Non-discrimination is another ethical duty, as counsellors are required to treat all clients fairly, regardless of their gender, race, religion, or socio-economic status.

They must also **avoid dual relationships**, where personal or financial relationships with clients could influence the objectivity of their professional judgement.

In addition, counsellors have a responsibility to engage in **continuous professional development** to stay updated on best practices and evolving ethical standards.

Boundary-setting is crucial as well, as counsellors need to maintain clear professional boundaries with their clients to avoid emotional entanglements or undue influence.

Principles and Methods of Administering Guidance Programs in Schools

1. **Primary Level:**

- Focus on helping young children adjust to school, develop social skills, and build a foundation for learning.
- Methods include classroom guidance, group activities, and individual counselling for behavioural or academic concerns.

2. **Secondary Level:**

- Focus on career planning, academic advising, and addressing personal issues related to adolescence.
- Methods include career fairs, counselling sessions on personal development, and group interventions for issues like peer pressure or family problems.

3. Tertiary Level:

- Focus more complex issues like career transitions, mental health support, and personal growth.
- Methods include workshops, internships, career counselling, and mental health services for issues like stress, anxiety, and depression.

Practical Programs and Issues in Nigeria

1. Testing Programmes:

In Nigeria, testing is often used to assess academic readiness and placement. However, there are concerns about the equity and fairness of testing, especially in rural areas where access to quality education may be limited.

2. Interpersonal Relationships:

Counsellors in Nigerian schools often face challenges in building strong relationships with students, due to large class sizes, cultural norms, and a lack of parental involvement.

3. Finance:

Funding for guidance services is often inadequate, leading to understaffed counselling departments and limited resources for implementing comprehensive guidance programs.

4. Cultural and Social Barriers:

Cultural attitudes toward mental health and counselling may prevent individuals from seeking help. Stigmatization of counselling services remains an issue, particularly in conservative communities.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS ON THIS TOPIC: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING (005)

1. What is a trend in modern guidance and counselling?

- A. Ignoring mental health
- B. Holistic counselling approaches
- C. Focusing only on academic performance
- D. Avoiding group counselling

2. What does inclusivity in guidance programmes mean?

- A. Only serving certain groups
- B. Accommodating diverse needs
- C. Excluding individuals with disabilities
- D. Ignoring language barriers

3. What is one reason for high caseloads among counsellors?

- A. Adequate funding
- B. Insufficient resources and support
- C. Small student populations
- D. Excess staff

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