

## **Counselling Needs of Higher Secondary School Students of Kerala: An Exploration into the Teacher Perception**

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**Abstract:** *The present investigation was directed towards the identification of counselling needs of the higher secondary school students of Kerala as perceived by higher secondary school teachers by normative survey method. Perceptions of 200 teachers from selected schools were used to assess the counselling needs. For this, a Counselling Needs inventory was constructed by the investigator. Results of the analysis indicate that higher secondary school students have strong counselling needs, as perceived by their teachers. Results also show that there is no significant difference between male and female teacher perception on the counselling needs of higher secondary school students.*

**Key terms:** *Counselling Needs, Teacher Perception.*

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### **I. Introduction**

The age group of higher secondary students extends from 16 to 19, which span in the later adolescent period. Adolescence is considered as the most tumultuous period of life. Hall (1976) rightly remarked that adolescence is the period of stress and strain, storm and stiff. The life of modern industrial societies is so complex where the intricacies of adolescence period are more hazardous. The basic characteristics of adolescence in modern times are increased emotional instability, period of unrealism, hero worship, moral dilemma, faster changes in the physical and biological system, temporary imbalance of whole endocrine system, tendency to incline towards anti social behaviour, drug and sex abuse and several other unique characteristics. It is widely accepted that the adolescent students need counselling support when they face personal, social, familial and educational issues. The present investigation is directed towards the identification of perceived counselling needs of the higher secondary school students by their teachers.

A need is any lack or deficit of something within an individual, either acquired or physiological, whose fulfilment would tend to promote the welfare of the individual. (Biswas & Aggarwal, 1971) Counselling needs are needs of a student that are required to resolve his/her problems which he/she confronts in day to day life situations and also to enrich his personal development.

Every human being has a strong desire to achieve some goals. The satisfaction of the achievement need leads a person to further activity. So this need is a motivating force which can be used properly for making teaching learning process effective. Children with growing intellectual capacities find a great interest in acquiring new knowledge. The spontaneous urge for knowledge should be properly guided. Adolescent students have a strong desire to do things independently. So they start thinking about their future career. They need vocational guidance. Need for belongingness is one of the most basic psychological needs. This includes need to have friends, to be loved and accepted by other people, need for affiliation and to belong to a network of social relations. In every individual, there will be a longing for recognition or approval. During the period of childhood and adolescence the longing for recognition is very high. Freedom is an important need which has to be satisfied. Needs to get freedom, to resist restriction, to express feelings freely and to get freedom of choice are also important needs at this stage. Every individual want to be more secure. The security need includes the need for economic and social security. Emotional handicap is a condition which results improper behaviour that interferes with the individual's ability to learn and function under normal circumstances. Problems resulted from emotional handicaps are anxiety, depression, learning disability and sense of inferiority. Students at this stage have a tendency to deviate from the accepted ways and patterns of society and not to conform to the expectations of society to which he belongs. Such deviant behaviour is detrimental to the welfare of himself/herself, his/her family and society. It leads to several behaviour problems including stealing, lying, drug addiction, truancy, aggression, abnormal outburst of temper, sexual harassment and bullying.

Kaila (2003), in the study on mental health of school students in Mumbai city, indicates that children and adolescents have high educational and vocational anxiety, and the students face problems such as low self-esteem, difficulties in managing anger and sexuality. Investigators suggested that school counsellors should be appointed on full time basis.

Harper D. Frederick et al., (2003), discussed how Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs can be used as a frame work for counsellors to assess the needs of children.

The psychological and educational consequences of sexual harassment of high school students were investigated in two studies by Duffy and Wareham (2004). Both the studies involved a modified survey originally designed for the American Association of University Women. In the study, which involved 760 male and 779 female high school students (mainly 16 to 19 years old), the investigator compared the behaviour and attitudes of (a) students who has recently been harassed and were upset by it and (b) students who had not harassed. Harassment led to several negative psychological and educational consequences rather than to a general stress reaction. Consequences are varied with the type of harassment experienced.

A study conducted by Farah. M. Adnan (2004) traces the development of guidance and counselling movement in Jordan. The study focuses on the need for counselling, Counselling settings, Counsellors training and problems of guidance and counselling programmes and services.

Plenty of studies on the counselling needs of adolescent students have been carried out all over the world. However, very few studies have been conducted in Indian context on counselling needs of adolescence. The present study is to identify the counselling needs of higher secondary school students of Kerala as perceived by their teachers.

## II. Method

The method followed for the present study for assessing the perceived counselling needs of higher secondary pupils is normative survey.

### Population and Sample

Initially fifty higher secondary schools were selected from different districts of Kerala for the study. A sample of 200 teachers from the selected schools was then identified to assess the counselling needs of higher secondary students. Sample was selected using stratified sampling technique giving due representation to Gender, School Locale and Type of Management of schools.

### Instruments

To assess the counselling needs of higher secondary students a Counselling Needs inventory was constructed by the investigator. The tool was administered among Teachers of Higher Secondary Schools. The tool consisted of 60 statements, each statement indicating a need and to be responded by choosing any one of the closed ended responses given i.e., very much needed, needed, and not needed. The statements were scored with 3, 2, and 1 respectively for very much needed, needed, and not needed for quantitative analysis.

### Procedure

Investigator visited 50 schools of the sample for collecting data. The inventory was administered to 200 teaches and the responses were scored on three point scale. The collected data were consolidated using spread sheet and subjected to statistical analysis. One sample t-test was used to ascertain the counselling needs of higher secondary school students. To test whether there is any gender difference in perceived counselling needs, two-tailed t-test for independent sample was used.

## III. Results

Counselling needs of higher secondary school students as perceived by higher secondary school teachers were ascertained for total sample and for subsamples of teachers. The data and results of the ascertained Counselling needs of higher secondary school students as perceived by the total sample of teachers is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Major Counselling needs ascertained by total sample of teachers**

Sl No	Major Counselling Needs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Test Value	t-value
1	Need for achievement	200	14.75	2.29	12	16.92**
2	Need for understanding	200	17.41	2.07	14	23.21**
3	Need for vocation	200	11.81	1.98	10	12.91**
4	Need for love and belongingness	200	19.81	2.62	16	20.46**
5	Need for approval	200	7.43	1.11	6	18.11**
6	Need for freedom	200	9.68	1.51	8	15.73**
7	Need for security	200	14.54	1.90	12	18.80**
8	Need to tackle emotional problems	200	19.06	2.50	16	17.23**
9	Need to tackle behavioural problems	200	20.49	2.61	16	24.28**

Note: \*\* indicates that the means are significant at 0.01 level

Results given in Table 1 on the Needs of Counselling for higher secondary school students, as perceived by higher secondary school teachers of total sample reveals that all the major nine counselling needs are essential since all the calculated t-values are significant at 0.01 level as the t-values far exceeds the value set for significance at 0.01 level. These needs in the order of significance are Need to tackle behavioural problems,

Need for understanding, Need for love and belongingness, Need for security, Need for approval, Need to tackle emotional problems, Need for achievement, Need for freedom and Need for vocation.

To know whether male and female teacher differ in their perception Counselling needs, two-tailed t-test was administered and the results are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Test of gender difference in the teacher perception of Counselling needs**

Major needs	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Need for achievement	Male	89	14.6742	2.53061	0.383
	Female	111	14.8018	2.08379	
Need for understanding	Male	89	17.1461	2.17188	1.573
	Female	111	17.6126	1.96872	
Need for vocation	Male	89	11.6180	2.00287	1.227
	Female	111	11.9640	1.95368	
Need for love and belongingness	Male	89	19.4382	2.70922	1.767
	Female	111	20.0991	2.52606	
Need for approval	Male	89	7.2472	1.22735	2.048*
	Female	111	7.5766	.99590	
Need for freedom	Male	89	9.5281	1.65206	1.254
	Female	111	9.8018	1.37391	
Need for security	Male	89	14.2135	1.97410	2.140*
	Female	111	14.7928	1.80966	
Need to tackle emotional problems	Male	89	18.9213	2.55941	0.673
	Female	111	19.1622	2.45890	
Need to tackle behavioural problems	Male	89	20.0899	2.60524	1.954
	Female	111	20.8108	2.57793	

Table 2 reveals that gender difference exist in the case of Need for approval and Need for security. Results also reveal that gender difference does not exist in the remaining seven Counselling needs. Thus, it can be understood from the response of the male and female teachers that they are unanimous in the perception of counselling needs of higher secondary students.

#### IV. Conclusion

Results of the analysis indicated that there are counselling needs among higher secondary school students of Kerala as perceived by their teachers. Results also show that there is no significant difference in the perception on the counselling needs of higher secondary school students between male and female teachers. It can thus be concluded that higher secondary school students are highly in need of counselling support for Need to tackle behavioural problems, Need for understanding, Need for love and belongingness, Need for security, Need for approval, Need to tackle emotional problems, Need for achievement, Need for freedom and Need for vocation. It is high time to implement counselling programmes considering students, teachers and parental needs in higher secondary schools. The current system of school counselling programmes in Kerala is to be revamped and a more systematic counselling support system is inevitably provided in schools. For this, policies and strategies are to be reframed at higher secondary level. Future researches must be oriented towards this so that we can help and secure the upcoming young generation to be mentally and emotionally healthy.

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