

Guidance and counseling in an educational institution.

Written by Col. Nusrat Ali Shah Kazmi.

The job of a teacher at the Army public college is both demanding and challenging. It demands a high sense of duty and total commitment to the tasks assigned and it offers great personal satisfaction in return. A teacher in this institution is expected to be a model of exemplary conduct and professional competence. Students look towards their teachers and idealize them. Being in a formative age, they are inspired by them. You must, therefore, be fully conscious of the great responsibility entrusted to you. You must be fully prepared and ever ready to provide proper guidance and counseling to your students.

The fact remains that every individual needs advice or counseling at some time in his life. Some need it constantly and throughout their lives, while others may require it only at rare intervals or at a time of some serious problem. Youngsters in particular are not capable of solving their problems independently or without assistance and advice hence they need more guidance.

Guidance and counseling in essence and content is thus, as old as man living an organized life. Islam also lays great emphasis on seeking advice and consultation. However, it emerged as a scientific concept, as a philosophy or as a movement and a programme after the industrial revolution in Europe.

Guidance defined

In simple words it means to indicate, to show the way, to lead, to direct or to steer. It is designed to assist a person in deciding where he wants to go? What he wants to do? Or how best he can accomplish his purpose?

Frank Person is the most prominent pioneer of the Guidance Movement. In the beginning of the current century, legislation was passed in the USA and European states to provide guidance and counseling services in schools. However, Trueman L. Kellay (1914) was the first social scientist to coin the term educational guidance. He described it as “the help given to students who have questions about choice of studies and school adjustment”.

In Pakistan, the importance of Guidance and Counseling was realized as early as 1959. The Sharif commission highlighted the usefulness of this service in the early 1960's.

This service was introduced in about 12 schools on experimental basis in the country. However, the programme was soon discontinued due to the following serious constraints;

- Extremely low rate of literacy in the country.
- Scarcity of educational facilities in the institutions.
- Lack of adequate resources to conduct and implement this programme.

Necessity of guidance:

The importance of necessity of guidance can be gauged from the following 2 angles.

a. Individual's need for guidance:

Human life is complex, so is the choice of occupations and types of schooling. Hence a young student is confronted with a bewildering complexity of choice of educational streams of the nature of future schooling and type of training required to lead a better life.

b. Necessity from the society point of view:

Society also has a claim. It's very safety and progress demands that each individual be in that place and occupation where he can contribute the maximum to the welfare of others and exploit his potential so as to be an active and profitable member of the community.

Some practical tips for the teachers as student counselors:

- If a student fails to behave or is a constant source of bad influence in the class, play on his emotional weakness by sheer threat by actually informing his 'pivot personality', i.e. the person by whom he is influenced the most or who matters to him.
- Do contact his parents. Student-Teacher-Parents make a trinity and a proper and constant interaction between the three can be very useful in ensuring improvement in the student's academic achievements.
- Have a record of your observations and the entire process.
- Call such a student in your spare period and talk to him exclusively in a discreet and informal manner and get to know his real problem.
- If so required, you may threaten to show him the Principal's office.
- Prepare a data sheet. You can have his personal file from the office if required.
- Get to know his family background including the following information:
 - Father's education and profession, -Mother's education and occupation, - Income/Financial resources, -Brothers and sisters,- Students order of birth,- Sphere of activity/interests and hobbies etc,-try to find who plays the pivotal role in his life i.e. mother, father, brother, grandfather etc.

Good teacher:

A good teacher is always concerned about his/her students and constantly keeps an eye on the classroom behavior and performance of the students. If he/she finds some decline in the students performance or a drastic change in the behavior pattern he/she should:

a. Get to know his problem:

- Why he behaves like this?
- Counsel him.
- If shows some positive signs, do pat and encourage him.
- Ignore minor lapses.

b. A good teacher has few problems of class discipline because he/she

- Is always well prepared for his/her class.
- Is punctual and regular in his/her daily routine.
- Is always caring and concerned about his/her students.
- Is dedicated and committed to his/her profession.

Conclusion:

The duty of a teacher does not end with lecturing or classroom teaching alone. His/her profession demands much more from him/her. He/she is like a parent to the students. He/she is a mentor, a reformed, and a guide to the students. A teacher is expected to be caring and concerned about the students and make effective contribution to their proper grooming so as to ensure wholesome development of their personalities. It is imperative on him/her to keep a close watch on his/her students, observe their class behavior as well as social profiles and above all provide them effective guidance and counseling to retrieve them from minor psychological problems, mal-adjustment or socio-emotional stresses if any.