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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ROLE OF COUNSELORS IN ENHANCING FEMALE EDUCATION IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The scenario of female education in India is not in good condition today. Especially in government schools and even with the people having rural background. Even if the girls get enrolled, their dropout rates are high after completing the secondary education. The major reasons could be, because their parents don't want them to study either due to early marriages of their girls or they think that spending on their further studies won't give them any benefit. To change this mindset, investigator thought of providing vocational counseling. Vocational counseling is a career focused on helping those who need to obtain work. Those with certain disadvantages in the employment world such as advanced age or disabilities might benefit from these services. The purpose of this study is to see whether the vocational counseling has any impact on the education of female students of government schools in nearby villages of Jaipur. For this purpose, a survey was conducted in government schools and it was seen that majority of parents of girls studying in Xth standard did not want them to study further. After seeing this shocking result a vocational counseling session was conducted for the parents as well as for the students. New and various vocations were introduced to the parents and the importance of education was the major subject of the session. After the group session as well as individual counseling sessions, again the parents were asked that whether they would like their girls to study further or not? And this time the responses were different. Various parents did change their mind and they wanted their girls to get their degree and become independent. Sample of 200 girls from 5 government schools of villages nearby Jaipur was selected. The enquiry method used in this study is semi-structured interview. Independent variable is vocational counseling and dependent variable is response of the parents. T-test has been applied to see the difference between the responses given by the parents pre-counseling and post-counseling. Results showed a significant improvement in parents' response after the vocational counseling.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the basic activities of people in all human societies. Both private and public sector provide education in India and the funding is done at central, state and local level. Indian constitution provides free and compulsory education as one of the major fundamental rights to children upto 14 years of age. Education is the fundamental to the success of any modern society.

The Rajasthan state government is endeavoring to achieve the objective of total literacy through various schemes. School children are being benefited with mid-day meals in the state. During the Eleventh Plan period 2007-12, special literacy camps for illiterate women and vocational training camps have been proposed under Literacy Continuing Education Programme. Further the role of education as an agent or instrument of social change and social development is widely recognized in the society.

Female education

Though literacy rate has been improved since past few years but women still have a much lower rate of literacy than men. Their enrollment rate is also low and drop outs are quite high. Due to the patriarchal family setting in India, girls have lower status and fewer privileges than male children. Conservative culture and traditions don't allow some girls to attend school and there are still some underprivileged groups who get their female children married in very young age. The number of literate women among the female population of India was between 2-6% from the British Raj onwards to the formation of the Republic of India in 1947. By 2001 literacy for women had exceeded 50% of the overall female population, though these statistics were still very low compared to world standards and even male literacy within India.

It has been seen that investing in girls helps disrupt the cycle of poverty. Peer-reviewed studies have shown that educated girls

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earn more income, will have healthier and fewer children, and are more likely to educate their own children.

Vocational Counseling

Vocational counseling is “the process of helping the individual to ascertain, accept, understand and apply the relevant facts about him to the pertinent facts about the occupational world which are ascertained through incidental and planned exploratory activities.”

The fundamental principle underlying the ideal approach to vocational guidance and counseling is to allow the individual to find his own vocation. We must allow the inclination toward a specific occupation to originate within the individual and then aid him in determining his suitability for it. This is not to suggest that we cannot help the individual gain information that will allow him to "lean" in one direction or another.

The task of vocational counseling is to aid the client first in gaining information about occupations and then in matching facts known about him with those known about the occupation, keeping the following points in mind:

General ability

A person must have sufficient general ability to meet at least the minimum requirements of a particular occupation. Before deciding to enter a vocation, the client should consider his ability to meet its demands, and in order to do this he must have some idea of the level of his general ability.

Specific Abilities

Some occupations require certain special abilities; and if the client is lacking in these, it may be impossible for him to pursue these occupations. A minimum amount of such specific skills or abilities makes adjustment simpler in many occupations.

Personal Traits

Persons of equal intellectual ability are not equally well fitted for the same types of work. One man will succeed as a supervisor or superintendent while another of equal intellectual ability will become prominent as a research worker.

Likes And Dislikes

The individual's interests and preferences, their absence, or negative feelings regarding a vocation constitute another significant aspect of the person's choice.

Physique

This is an important attribute in some vocations although it is probably of less consequence than it was some time ago. The matter of strength must be taken into consideration in a few crude manual-labor positions where minimums may be required.

Vocational counseling is not regarded as a special or separate skill or trade. We do not feel that personal counselors and

vocational counselors are different kinds of psychological counselors. Rather, in the practical working situation, vocational and personal counseling are so intertwined as to be indistinguishable.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted to see the impact of vocational counseling on female education. For this purpose, a survey was conducted in five government schools nearby Jaipur (Rajasthan). The sample was 200, Xth class female students. The survey was in the form of semi structured interview and one to one questions to the parents of these students were asked whether they would like their girls to study further; if “yes” why? and if “no” why? After collecting the data, sessions on vocational counseling were kept for the parents and different and new vocations were introduced to them. Major emphasis was on the importance of education and female independence. After the sessions, again the same questions were asked to the parents to see the impact of counseling on their responses. The enquiry method used in this study is semi-structured interview. Independent variable is vocational counseling and dependent variable is response of the parents. T-test has been applied to see the difference between the responses given by the parents pre-counseling and post-counseling.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out to study the impact of vocational counseling on female education. A data of 200 girls (Xthstd.) from government school was conducted for the pre-test. The enquiry method was used and the parents of these girls were asked whether they would like their daughters to study further and why. Out of two hundred, 107 people agreed for further education but 93 parents refused to provide further education to their daughters, which is almost 46% of the total population. After seeing this shocking result, vocational counseling was provided to the parents; different and new vocations were introduced to them. Major emphasis was on the importance of education and female independence. After the vocational counseling sessions, again the parents were asked the same questions. This time 163 parents were in favor of further education of the girl child, which is almost 82%, that is, nearly double the prior result. Further t-test was applied to this data as a statistical analysis technique. Here the mean value of pre-test came out to be 0.535 and mean value of post test came out to be 0.815 and the p value was significant at 0.01 level. This showed a highly significant difference between the pre and post test. The above result and discussion clearly shows that the vocational counseling does have a favorable impact on female education and if provision of vocational counseling has been made available to everyone, our state and country will definitely show a high level of improvement as far as female education is concerned.

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