

Effectiveness of Counseling “Seeding Hope Counseling Centre”: A Best Practice in Higher Educational Institutions

Dr. Clayton Michael Fonceca¹, Ms. Latha Munuswamy² & Dr. K. Arockiaraj³

¹Asst. Professor, P.G. & Research Department of Social Work, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur – 635601

²Counsellor, Seeding Hope Counseling Centre, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur – 635601

³Asst. Professor, P.G. & Research Department of Social Work, Sacred Heart College, Tirupattur – 635601
Corresponding Author; Dr. Clayton Michael Fonceca

Abstract: Counseling is the process of helping an individual to sort out troubled areas in their lives, analyze how they feel about themselves and to have an outlook on their opinions by paying a way to choose a course of action that fits their values, resources and lifestyle. The present study was undertaken to study the effectiveness of the counseling as one of the Best Practices of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous). The random sampling technique was adopted and one-third of the total population was taken for the study which constituted of 102 respondents. An instrument was developed and reliability was found to be .793 Cronbach's Alpha. The present study clearly highlights the fact that the “Seeding Hope Counselling Centre” does play a significant role in its outreach to the student community in rendering better guidance, influential motivation and effective problem solving strategies. A student's success lies in the health status of his/her emotional, psychological, mental well-being, which is taken care through the process of counselling

Key words: Counseling, Seeding Hope Counseling Centre & Students

Date of Submission: 04-10-2018

Date of acceptance: 16-10-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

Counseling is the process of helping an individual to sort out troubled areas in their lives, analyze how they feel about themselves and to have an outlook on their opinions by paying a way to choose a course of action that fits their values, resources and lifestyle. It is about helping normal, functional individuals handle the usual problems, opportunities and choices that come up as they face challenges in their life. As mentioned above, the term ‘counseling’ can be used in a number of ways. According to the American Counseling Association – ACA (2018) counseling is “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals. The Oxford Dictionary (2018) defines counseling as “the provision of professional assistance and guidance in resolving personal or psychological problems”. However, the aims of counseling is a very broad area and it is governed by the situation of the individual and the type of environment he/she is in.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In an article by **Renuka Devi M.R (2013)**, on “The Effects of Counseling on the Academic Performance of College Students”, stated that adjustment difficulties of college students have been an emerging issue and the study revealed that there was an increase in the average marks by about 15% -25% among 43% of the students who had been given counseling to cope up with their challenges.

According to a study by **Zack Budryk (2013)** in ‘Reaching Students Early’, stated the fact that early counseling plays an important role for students to cope up with their studies and address difficulties they face in their day to day lives. The study also underlined the fact that nearly 50 percent of students’ dropouts were reduced due to effective counseling practices.

It is also evident as per the new guidelines denoted by the **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC - 2017)**, that there is significant emphasizes on Student Support and Progression with much weightage given to the institutions’ effectiveness in rendering guidance and counselling whereby reducing the rate of dropouts and enabling students to acquire the necessary skills, awareness and knowledge, which will enable them to be better individuals and citizens to the country.

Significance of the Study

Counseling has now become an integral part of all programmes leading to higher education as the life of students is getting complex day by day. Guidance and counseling is needed to help the students achieve optimum accomplishment and adequate adjustment in the varied life situations. Hence, there is an urgent need for introducing and strengthening the counseling services of not only in schools but also in colleges of our country.

Rational

A vast majority of students in Sacred Heart College (Autonomous) are from rural areas, they are also first generation learners; and from a low socio economic profile. Many students enrolled in the college have predominant unhealthy parenting, alcoholic or abusive parents, disturbed study environment, dysfunctional family setup etc. Coming from such an environment, students need guidance in psychological and academic areas for which the counseling and mentoring services are beneficial. Students, who face age related/family/peer group issues, find it difficult to concentrate in academics; such students with the guidance of mentor and counsellor will be able to cope better in academics and personal life. A student's success lies in the health status of his/her physical and psychological well-being, which can be taken care through the process of counseling and mentoring.

In understanding the above factors, Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), setup a specific division under the banner “Seeding Hope Counseling Centre” to enable students to cope up with their day to day problems, solve adjustmental issues, develop self-motivation strategies and to become self-reliant individuals.

III. MATERIAL & METHODS

Aim of the Study

To study the effectiveness of the counselling as one of the Best Practices of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous).

Objectives

- To understand the effectiveness of counseling programme rendered to the students
- To highlight the level to which students feel they are satisfied and benefited from the counselling process.
- To denote the extent to which students feel they have overcome their problems and improved their stay in the college.

Universe and Sampling Frame Work

The study was extended to students who have visited the Counseling Centre on more than one occasion at Sacred Heart College (Autonomous) and the period of the study was 2 months. The random sampling technique was adopted and one-third of the total population was taken for the study which constituted of 102 respondents.

Research Design

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study as it is used to depict the outcome of participants in an accurate way. This design was also used to describe the characteristics of the population being studied whereby denoting the effectiveness of counseling as one of the best practices of Sacred Heart College.

Tools of Data Collection

A questionnaire was developed and tested using an online platform to enable students to provide their feedback on how effective they have resolved their problems and the extent to which they found the counseling services rendered effective. Two instruments were used to facilitate such data, one using a ‘Likert’ five point rating scale and another a three point rating scale. The reliability of the instrument was tested and found to be .793 Cronbach's Alpha. Various statistical analysis using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Ver. 21 was also implied to study the effectiveness of the practice.

Analysis of Data

Table 1: Distribution of respondents with regard to their Year of Education

S.No.	Year of Education	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
1	I Year	63	61.8
2	II Year	17	16.7
3	III Year	22	21.6

It can be inferred from table 1 that, majority (61.8%) of the respondents were I year students. A little more than two-fifth (21.6%) of the respondent are final year students and a little more than one-tenth (16.7%) of the students were II year students. It could be further inferred that the transition from school to college has brought this ideal inferences in the composition of respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents with regard to their Gender

S.No.	Gender	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
1	Male	36	35.3
2	Female	66	64.7

The above table reveals that majority (64.7%) of the respondents are female and a little more than one-third (35.3%) of the respondents are male. This could further infer that female students, especially in rural areas experience significant more problems and thence require specialized counselling.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents with regard to their Caste

S.No.	Caste	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
1	OC	4	3.9
2	BC	46	45.1
3	SC/ST	16	15.7
4	MBC	35	34.3
5	Others	1	1.0

The presented table throws light on the distribution of respondents based on their caste. This was carried out not to discriminate the respondents but to understand the holistic nature of data to be computed. From the presented table it is evident that less than two-fourth (45.1%) of the respondents belong to the backward caste.

A little more than one-third (34.3%) of the respondents belong to the most backward caste. A little more than one-tenth (15.7%) of the respondents belong to SC/ST and a meager (3.9%) and (1%) of the respondents hail from the OC and other caste respectively.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents with regard to their Native Domicile

S.No.	Native Domicile	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
1	Rural	67	65.7
2	Urban	9	8.8
3	Town	26	25.5

Table 4, clearly reveals that majority (65.7%) of the students from Sacred Heart College are from a rural background. A little more than one-fourth (25.5%) of the respondents were hailing from a town and a less than one-tenth (8.8%) of the respondents are from an urban setup respectively.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents with regard to the Satisfaction in the Counseling Process

Satisfaction in the Counselling Process	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
Low	33	32.4
High	69	67.6

From the above table it is evident that a vast majority (67.6%) of the respondents stated a high level of satisfaction with regard to the Counseling process carried out by Sacred Heart College. Less than one-third (32.4%) of the respondents denoted a low rating with regard to the same.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents with regard to the Effectiveness of Counseling rendered.

Effectiveness of Counselling	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
Low	35	34.3
High	67	65.7

It is evident from the presented table (12), that a vast majority (65.7%) of the respondents felt that the counselling rendered to them by the “Seeding Hope Counseling Centre”, was of high significance, while less than one-third (34.3%) of the respondents denoted a low rating with regard to the same.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents with regard to the Overall Effectiveness of Counseling

Overall Effectiveness of Counselling	Frequency (N:102)	Percentage (%)
Low	34	33
High	68	67

The research undertaken reveals that a vast majority (67%) of the students denoted a high acclaim with regard to the overall effectiveness of Counseling. One-third (33%) of the respondents stated that the programme could be still improved.

Stigma

As it's already mentioned in the study that majority of the students are from a rural background, they had no awareness about the concept of counseling. It was thought that counseling was just getting advice and people with problems only go to a counselor. Visiting the counselor was seen here as a stigma and students who received guidance went were identified as people with severe problems. In recognizing the above challenge, the college since 2014 made counseling compulsory for all the first year students. Various programmes and sessions were also carried out to spread awareness on the real concept and essence of counseling. This has enabled students to overcome the above stigma and receive professional help whenever necessary.

IV. CONCLUSION

The presented study clearly highlight the fact that the “Seeding Hope Counseling Centre” does play a significant role in its outreach to the student community in rendering better guidance, influential motivation and effective problem solving strategies. A student's success lies in the health status of his/her emotional, psychological, mental well-being, which is taken care through the process of counselling. Hence the need for counseling has become a crucial part in Sacred Heart College and has helped students to deal with their problems day in and day out successfully.

WORKS CITED

- [1]. Association, A. C. (2018, June 1). Stephen F. Austin University. Retrieved from State University: <http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/182.asp>
- [2]. Budryk, Z. (2018, June). Reaching Students Early. Retrieved from Insight Highered: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/05/16/nacac-study-says-counseling-can-affect-students-college-aspirations>
- [3]. Dictionary, O. (2018, July 30). English Oxford Living Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/counselling>
- [4]. E.Taylor, S. (2008). Health Psychology. New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill.
- [5]. Kenneth S.Bordens, B. B. (2005). Research Design and Methods. New Delhi: Tata McGraw- Hill.
- [6]. National Assessment and Accreditation Council. (2018, June). Retrieved from http://www.naac.gov.in/criteria_assessment.asp
- [7]. R, R. D. (2013). The Effect of Counselling on the Academic Performance of College Students. Journal of Clinical and Diagonistic Research, 1086–1088.
- [8]. Shuttleworth, M. (2018, June). Descriptive Research Design. Retrieved from Explorable: <https://explorable.com/descriptive-research-design>