

Fifty Glorious Years of NCERT in Guidance and Counselling

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Abstract

*NCERT is the only nodal agency at the national level which has contributed to the field of guidance and counselling consistently, and over the last 50 years. While celebrating the Golden Jubilee year of NCERT, golden jubilee of guidance and counselling work at NCERT legitimately comes to mind. The Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education of NCERT (name changed at different points of time) had been engaged in professional work in guidance and counselling extensively since its inception, or even much before in Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance (CBEVG) which was established as early as in 1954, and later on merged with NCERT in 1961. This way it is one of the oldest and primary thrust area in which NCERT continues to be engaged till today. The Golden Jubilee year is the time for introspection, reflection on its achievements and future challenges.***

Historical Context

Guidance services in school education made a beginning after the recommendations of Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) emphasising the need to introduce planned guidance services for enabling students to plan their future wisely and for proper social adjustment. The Commission recommended the services of trained Guidance Officers and Career Masters as well as the Centre to take up responsibility for opening regional training centres. As a result,

establishment of CBEVG in October 1954, as a section of the Secondary Education Division of Ministry of Education was the first major step. The CBEVG was responsible for encouraging and strengthening the development of guidance movement in the country, and providing necessary leadership by making the public aware of its need, and creating a better understanding of its nature and philosophy.

In September 1960, CBEVG was placed under administrative control of Central Institute of Education,

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Delhi. A year later, with establishment of National Council of Educational Research and Training, it was merged with its National Institute of Education. Before its merger with NCERT, CBEVG was working for the implementation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Guidance (originally formulated by CBEVG) through which various State Governments were offered central assistance for setting up Bureaus of Guidance or expanding the existing ones. This assistance was also offered to private educational and research institutions and social welfare agencies.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Guidance was introduced by the Government of India as a part of Third Five Year Plan for education. The CBEVG, though being a Central agency meant to meet the needs of the whole of the country, had certain functions in common with State Bureaus such as training of guidance personnel, conducting research on various problems in the field of guidance, preparation of tests and tools of assessment, collection and dissemination of occupational information including preparation of occupational information literature and other visual aids. However, unique functions of CBEVG as an all India institution were with the aim to provide leadership to the guidance movement. Its important activities included: preparation of the Government of India's schemes for development of guidance in the country, advising the Ministry of Education on matters pertaining to guidance, offering consultation services to state Governments, Universities and other agencies working in the field of guidance, organising conferences of

guidance personnel from all over the country, collecting guidance statistics on a nation-wise scale, serving as a clearing-house for information regarding psychological tests and research in the field of guidance, and co-ordination with other agencies working in the field of guidance such as National Employment Service.

All these functions of the Bureau continued after merger with NCERT. Rather research and training functions assumed greater importance. The following would throw light on how NCERT continued to perform these functions in changing times.

Training

The Council had made consistent efforts in training professionals in guidance and counselling to meet the educational, career, personal-social-emotional needs of school students and promote their well-being. NCERT's flagship programme on Post Graduate level Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling for preparing the trained personnel to plan and implement guidance and counselling services at school level is well known since 1958. The distinctive feature of this nine months course was its focus to provide the trainees sound theoretical orientation and practical skill training in all areas of student development and for all the school stages.

In the initial stages, state level educational agencies and teacher training colleges deputed candidates following the recommendations of Education Commission 1952 and 1964-66. However, later on, fresh candidates aspiring to be school counsellors also

benefitted from the course and were employed as counsellors in government schools within a period of two years after completion of training. NCERT's follow-up of the trained counsellors revealed that during 90s, employment opportunities to trained counsellors were available more in non-school settings than in schools. However, they are employed in the field in school settings and non-school settings, utilise their training, and are generally satisfied. The course continuously evolved in line with the educational policies, emerging school students' needs/ concerns and that of society, latest trends in the field as well as feedback provided by the trained counsellors from time to time. Guidance in the context of vocationalisation of education, career development of girls, guidance for special groups such as differently abled, creative, educationally backward, economically disadvantaged were some such areas introduced especially during 1980s and 90s, to equip the trainee-counsellors meet the needs of the students.

Over a period of time, the need and demand for guidance and counselling services in schools increased. However, the trained counsellors/teacher-counsellors have been in short supply in comparison to the ever increasing demands. Therefore, NCERT offered this course from its four RIEs (Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Mysore) since 2000.

Subsequently, the reputation and wide acceptance of this course enabled the Council to plan for the first time International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling for Asian and African countries, as guidance

and counselling services are now being increasingly recognised as indispensable for school students even in developing countries. This six months face-to-face mode course was specially designed on the 'Teacher as a Counsellor' model which emphasised the teachers' special role in helping and guiding students. The course aimed to empower the teachers to be guides and mentors rather than only subject experts, and bring about changes in their attitudes, perceptions and ways of interacting with students. The first such course was offered for teachers and teacher-educators from Maldives, Sri Lanka and Zambia during 2002-2003. During 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, trainees from Bhutan, Fiji Island, Sri Lanka and from different states of the country participated.

In view of the more flexible approaches available in the form of Distance and Open Learning systems and use of technology to train persons in large numbers staying at far off places, the Council decided to offer the International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling (IDGC) through Distance/Online Mode. NCERT entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Canada to offer a pilot run of the course, to make the training facilities in guidance and counselling available to teachers and guidance workers from Asian (including India) and African countries. The course, first of its kind, commenced on January, 2009 and is being offered at six study centres of NCERT including DEPF (nodal centre) and five RIEs located at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Mysore

and Shillong. The unique features of this course are: (i) Opportunities for multicultural interaction among students representing various ethnic and racial groups, (ii) Exposure to present-day practices and trends in guidance and counselling in various developing countries, and (iii) Enrichment in the form of therapies and healing practices derived from various philosophical and cultural traditions, use of spirituality in counselling, human values in cross-cultural perspectives, and new approaches to psychological assessment. The one-year course consists of three phases, viz. Guided Self-learning (6 months; Distance/Online), Intensive Practicum (3 months Contact Programme at the study centre), and Internship (3 months; in participant's home town). The quality of this course lies in its study material including self-learning modules for all the theory courses, *Course Guide, Practicum Handbook and Tutor Guide* which is developed under the guidance of an Instructional Designer from Commonwealth of Learning, Canada; supplemented with audio-video programmes; uniformity in the transaction of the course at all the study centres and great emphasis and weightage to experiential learning.

Short-term In-service Training

Along with the professional Diploma Course, the Council designed and introduced a short-term in-service course in guidance and counselling for school teachers to train them as career masters/career teachers during 1960s. The course popularly known as Career Masters/ Teachers Training used to be of 21-30 days duration. It

was aimed at providing teachers some basic understanding of guidance and counselling concepts and techniques to prepare them for career information and guidance work in schools. Literature in simple language was developed for the purpose which took the shape of Publication *Readings for Career Teachers* in 1985. Such courses were either conducted by the Council for school teachers of various states at their respective places, or NCERT faculty was deputed from time to time to act as resource persons in courses organised by state-level guidance agencies. The career teachers training programmes covered almost all the states/regions of the country and are still popular in the North Eastern states. As a special effort for the educational upliftment of schools managed by educationally backward minority communities, particularly the Muslims, the Council organised 28 days training course for career teachers of minority managed schools continuously for three years during 1985-86 to 1987-88. Besides this, a series of 3 week training programme were also organised for DIETs personnel from different states on understanding and guiding elementary school children.

Development

Development of materials in guidance and counselling has been NCERT's forte. It is the only organisation which has developed a wide variety of materials including resource books, manuals, handbooks, monographs, readings, training packages, exemplar activities, self-learning modules, case studies, guidelines, distance learning modules, audio-visual materials etc.

in the area. The materials are targeted for different users like counsellors, guidance personnel, trainee counsellors, counsellor educators, teachers, students etc.

Keeping in view the changing societal needs, policy perspectives and curricular concerns in school education coupled with research findings, field experiences/observations and gaps pointed out in trend reports, the nature of materials and user target group has varied from time to time.

The 1950s and 1960s were the era of introduction of guidance services in schools and the focus of guidance was on educational and career guidance, and training personnel. Therefore, to begin with, NCERT developed guidance literature in the form of guidance series, monographs and pamphlets, relevant specifically to the Indian situations for dissemination to states to support guidance services at the state and school level. Series titles like *Guidance Movement in India*, *Guidance Services in Schools* are still of interest to guidance professionals. Not only that, *Guidance Review*, a quarterly journal was also published to create awareness and disseminate the developments in the field across the country. These efforts of the Council pushed the development of guidance movement in the country. As the focus of guidance services during the first three decades continued to be more on educational and vocational guidance of students which was supposed to help them find suitable employment and contain youth unemployment, the literature produced by NCERT had that tilt. The guidance literature was simple, and especially published

for use of school students, teachers, parents etc. For example, a series of pamphlets *Vyavsay Prichaya Mala* on titles like *Hamare Vyavsai*, *Lipik Varg Ke Vyavsai*; *Kala Sambandhi Vyavasai* etc. introducing different occupations to VIII and IX standard students; booklets for secondary school students on titles like *You and Your Future*, *What Makes You a Good Reader*, *How Can You Learn Better*, *How to Get Along With Others*, *How to study effectively* etc. career literature on three jobs families – ‘Humanities’, ‘Science’ and ‘Commerce’, etc., booklets like *Your Child at the Cross Roads* for parents, were widely disseminated and found useful by them as well as by those conducting training programmes for teachers and counsellors.

With introduction of 10+2+3 pattern of education in 70s, organisation of guidance services for the new pattern and development of related guidance material in the form of approach paper, articles, sets of guidance posters etc. also became a priority for the nodal centre. Later on, guidance programmes to promote self-employment and develop entrepreneurship qualities in vocational stream students and self-instructional modules in the area of pedagogy for vocational teachers were developed.

The material development in 1980s and 90s has been based on traditional lines as well as changing times and technology. The materials contributed to addressing the educational areas emphasised in NPE (1986), viz. all round development of children; child-centered education; vocational education; disabled; educational development of disadvantaged including SC/STs, children from rural, hilly, desert areas

etc; promoting women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education and Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). On the one hand there were publications meant for guidance personnel and teachers like books on *Annotated Bibliography of Occupational Literature; Readings for Career Teachers, Manual for Guidance Counsellors, Guidance for Gifted, Guidance Programmes for Adjustment of Navodaya Vidyalaya Students; package for Enhancing Personal-Social Skills of Students, exemplar activities integrating Guidance Inputs into Teaching of Subjects for Self-Development, and Work Orientation of Students; practical guide on Counselling Case Management, Guidelines for Setting up a Guidance and Counselling Centre in Schools Readings In Value Education For Counsellors; Manual each on Behaviour Modification and Learning and Development etc* On the other hand, materials for students were also developed which included Modules for *Self-guidance of Students, Manual on Peer Counsellors, Monograph on Careers, Programmes for Entrepreneurship Development etc.*

The *Multimedia Packages* target all the stakeholders having audio-video programmes for teachers, parents, students, teacher-educators and can be used in teacher training as well.

A wide variety of publications were meant for teacher-educators, counsellor-educators, researchers etc. For example, Volumes of *Readings on Child-Centred Education; Researches in child and Adolescent Psychology, Behaviour Modification; Building Personal and Career Consciousness of Girls. Handbook on Identification and Development of*

Talent, Resource book and a manual on Education for Creativity; research based books on Vocational Maturity of Creative Adolescents, Career Behaviour of Creative girls, Career Development of Creative Girls; Handbooks containing reviews of tests each on Personality Measurement; Measurement of Values, Attitudes, Interests; Ability Measurement etc. in India.

NCERT also developed indigenous training material and resource books for the first time for the use of trainee-counsellors, counsellor-educators and practitioners. These resource books are on theory and practice of guidance and counselling, career development, occupational information etc. These books along with other materials mentioned above are also used by trainee counsellors.

The latest landmark achievement of the Council is the development of self-learning modules for all the theory courses of International Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling through Distance/Online Mode. Coupled with Course Guide, Practical Handbook and Tutor Guide, all these publications form a complete package for conducting the above mentioned course which is also offered by the Council across six study centres in the country. Right now, the focus is on development of audio-video programmes to supplement and standardise theory and practicum courses across study centres.

In general, the materials support NCERT's stand that guidance is for all. It is an integral part of education and is aimed at all round development of students. It is developmental and proactive, and should begin from the

primary school stage. The Council has worked towards influencing the traditional mindset of guidance and counselling seekers as well as providers who visualised the scope of guidance limited to assistance in educational and vocational choices or in crisis situation only. More so, the Council has produced required materials and aids, which have potential to promote guidance and counselling services and train persons in this field.

Research

Research in guidance and counselling at NCERT over the years has been conducted keeping in view students' needs and the contemporary concerns of school education. The research areas explored include abilities, interests, achievement, adjustment, vocational development, needs and psychological characteristics of different categories including educationally/socially disadvantaged, gifted, creative students etc. at different school stages and the effect (efficacy) of planned interventions or existing guidance programmes in schools. However, the emphasis of research areas from time to time during the last five decades aimed at providing basis for development of suitable materials for dissemination, utilisation in orientation/training/extension programmes and to design suitable need-based guidance programmes. A bird's eye view of researches carried out in guidance and counselling follows:

In the 1960s and 70s, research was mainly focused on areas like vocational development, career/occupational information, abilities, adjustment etc. to widen understanding of educational

and vocational guidance. The focus has been to study effect of counselling intervention on achievement of bright underachievers, potential failures; understanding problems, interest patterns and work values of boys with superior scholastic ability, adjustment patterns of boys with scholastically superior ability in relation to socio-economic status and educational achievement; vocational development, expectations and choices of adolescents; evaluation of different methods of teaching of occupations (humanities, science, commerce) at middle and higher secondary leaving stages; stabilisation of abilities and interests with respect to age and grade level of children; evaluation of guidance programmes being implemented etc. In the late 1970s, students from different socio-cultural groups were also studied with a view to promoting their development and academic participation. These were extensive studies involving other institutions also. First such study was for understanding backgrounds, needs, problems, perceptions, attitudes, and cognitive, developmental, educational, and psychological characteristics of First Generation Learners (FGLs), and its effect on educational and vocational development for the purposes of planning interventions. Another study was carried out to examine the effect of socio-cultural deprivation on educational development of rural children. During seventies, intensive studies on the load of homework and its relationship with students' academic achievement, nature and function of group process with a view to improving teaching-learning process and motivating children were carried out.

While training professionals and strengthening guidance services continued, the focus of research during the 1980s was for planning suitable interventions for various categories of student populations, and to provide an empirical base to guidance services in schools. Some studies attempted to identify guidance-needs of different groups of students like scheduled castes, tribals, creative, girls etc. and even those enrolled in vocational stream to develop guidance interventions. Few other studies were meant to find out the outcome of guidance interventions carried out to achieve specific purposes like developing career potential of girls, promoting adjustment of Navodaya Vidyalaya students finding impact of school guidance programme through follow-up of school leavers etc. Some were exploratory studies, for example, identifying learning problems of primary school children and prevalent practices adopted by primary school teachers were aimed to develop suitable material and provide training to primary teachers. Longitudinal studies on adolescent development and even meta analysis of Indian studies on adolescent development helped to create holistic picture of Indian adolescents for guidance of counsellor-educators and trainee-counsellors. All the above mentioned areas of research and the variety of groups studied are generally not understood under the purview of guidance and counselling. However, these go with the national concern of promoting development of all students and addressing needs and social concerns of different groups.

As indicated in the trend reports, there was decline on research in

guidance and counselling in late 80s and 90s. During the late 90s, the focus of guidance and counselling research was to research into the Council's reputed counsellor training programme. For the purpose, a first follow-up study of counsellors trained by NCERT was undertaken to study employment status, job effectiveness and satisfaction of trained counsellors, and to suggest changes for improvement in counsellor training programme and for administrators and policy makers. Even profile of effective school counsellor was prepared. Another study was aimed at validation of selection procedure (admission) used for performance in the counsellor training programme and job effectiveness. Both the studies established creditability of the professional training.

During the same period, in line with its leadership role, an in-depth study of guidance research in India was completed in order to provide insight into the status of guidance research in India and guidelines for further research and practice. The changing needs and behaviours of adolescents in fast changing society also inspired the study of adolescent's perception of social norms to identify areas of conflict in adolescents, and developing guidelines for parents to reduce adolescents' conflicts, and enhance their development.

In later years, the assessment of guidance needs of students, though not as part of a systematic research continued as part of information collected by the trainee-counsellors each year so as to plan suitable interventions like individual and group counselling

as well as classroom developmental guidance and counselling programmes.

In short, the NCERT's research projects were in tune with the socio-cultural context and realities prevailing in the country to contribute towards developing theory and practice of guidance and counselling suitable to our own context. The findings of research studies and status/need surveys also formed the bases for developing materials and designing the programmes for state level functionaries, guidance counsellors and counsellor training programmes from time to time.

Research Related to Development of Psychological Tests

In continuation to one of the CBEVG's mandatory functions related to development of tools for psychological assessment, some projects were taken in this area during the first two decades after its merger. The tools developed at that time were intended to be used for guidance and counselling or for further research in the area due to lack of Indian tools and norms available for conducting research on school students as well as providing guidance and counselling to students. The major tests and tools developed during this period included: *Scholastic Aptitude Tests*, *Non-verbal Test of Intelligence*, *Group Test of Intelligence*, *Vocational Interest Inventory*, *Differential Aptitude Test Battery*, *Personality Inventory for Adolescents*, *Scale to Measure Adolescents' Aptitude towards Authority*, *Standardisation of Achievement Test Battery for classes I to VII*, *Construction and Standardisation of Achievement Tests in Book-keeping and Elements of Commerce*.

Diagnostic Tests on 'Indices and Surds' to know the difficulties of students and provide specimen to teachers for further development of their own tests were also developed.

The work related to developmental norms for children in the age group 5 ½ to 11 years with a view to improving the process of their education was completed on a very large scale. By the end of 1970s, the development of tests discontinued due to lack of suitable faculty and activity demanding a lot of time. Also, Indian psychological tests published by some Indian publishers, foreign tests, or Indian adaptation of foreign tests were found available in the market. NCERT decided to establish a test library on the recommendations of International Congress of Applied Psychology for procuring tests for reference purposes. This library is now known as National Library of Educational and Psychological Tests (NLEPT), and is an archive of a large number and variety of specimen sets of tests / tools and materials and literature on testing for consultation by faculty and trainees of Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling, researchers and professionals across the country. The tests obtained in different areas like intelligence, personality, aptitudes, values, attitudes, interests etc. are reviewed by psychometric experts. Some of the tests reviews were published by NCERT in the form of Handbooks for the benefit of users. The library serves as a reference test library, an information centre for educational and psychology tests. Every year about 400-500 researchers consult the library.

Extension

Networking and leadership role in the field of guidance and counselling has been central to NCERT all these years. Promoting guidance and counselling services has been the biggest challenge for NCERT as guidance and counselling services in the states struggle for survival due to lack of financial and other kinds of support. The organisation continued to motivate the states and sustain their interest in offering these services to students. These included orientation programmes for persons in leadership positions for their awareness and involvement for building strengths (professional) of staff, orientation of educational administrators at the top, and teachers and parents. NCERT played a big role in facilitating interaction among state level educational administrators and key guidance professionals across the country. This interaction in the form of national level conference began in 1976, and six such conferences were organised upto 1998 at Delhi, Bangalore, Pune, Thiruvanthapuram, Tirupati and Secunderabad. These conferences provided a platform, for sharing of ideas and the guidance and counselling activities conducted by different states, an opportunity of getting exposed to new and emerging concerns and strategies, and planning meaningful programmes at their places for strengthening of guidance and counselling services. The Council has been periodically conducting, after every 2-3 years, orientation programmes of 3-4 days duration in guidance and counselling for District Education Officers, Principals of Higher Secondary Schools and Heads of States and Private

Bureaus, Key Guidance Personnel in states etc. across the country. As the persons in these positions keep on changing, orientation of incumbents was considered important to create awareness in key persons to help them provide leadership for monitoring guidance and counselling services in schools and provide necessary support. The orientation programmes also included new and emerging concerns/problems requiring guidance intervention. Till 1990-91 these programmes covered quite a large number of states. In order to involve other stakeholders like parents and teachers for developing/organising guidance services in schools, a series of orientation programmes of 3-day duration for PTA personnel were also organised at Delhi, Pune and Thiruvanthapuram. About 100 PTA personnel were exposed to guidance and counselling services.

During 1985-88, NCERT especially planned and conducted a series of seminars-cum-workshops on guidance services for managers and principals of minority managed schools. The purpose was to provide them orientation to guidance and counselling services, their implementation in schools, and their role in introducing the services and providing continuous leadership and monitoring. Similar programme focusing on training methodology was organised for Directors and Resource Persons of Regional Resource Centres for Minorities Educational Programmes. These programmes along with training of career teachers equipped these institutions to plan and implement guidance and counselling services systematically. The Central Tibetan

Schools Administration (CTSA) was also helped to systematically plan and implement guidance services in schools through orientation of administrators and principals and training of career teachers. Vocational education emerged as another area of introduction of guidance and counselling services in school during 1980s (NPE, 1986 POA, 1992) when vocational teachers at the +2 stage were expected to provide guidance and counselling to students and their parents. A series of seminars and training programmes for vocational teachers across various states were organised. The programmes in guidance and counselling and development of material suitable to the needs of vocational teachers and even educational administrators were later taken up by Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), a constituent of the Council especially established at Bhopal to provide leadership to vocational education programme in the country.

The Council had also been organising refresher courses/enrichment programmes and seminars for trained guidance personnel/counsellors to make them aware of new developments in the field and to help them address to the emerging needs of students from time to time. Such programmes though started in 1960s were more frequent during 1980s. A wide range of issues, concerns, and developments such as guidance for slow learners, creative students, vocational stream students; application of technology in guidance and counselling; new approaches to counselling; family counselling,

counselling skills; counselling for AIDS, drugs abuse; development of personal-social skills and promoting mental health; guidance for groups with special needs and socially disadvantaged; organisation of guidance services at district/state level; strengthening value education in schools etc. were included on the basis of need surveys conducted for state-level guidance agencies.

NCERT had to continue efforts towards strengthening of guidance services, as due to discontinuance of central assistance, these services suffered a set back. That is why today about 20 states have guidance set-up though many of them still fall short of their functions. It has been due to the persuasion and academic assistance of the Council that motivated and encouraged some of the states to initiate/sustain these services. As a part of strengthening exercise, the Council continued to organise orientation programme/seminars, etc., for key resource personnel in guidance and counselling in one form or another. These included all the guidance personnel whether trained or untrained. Special programmes were also organised for untrained key personnel in guidance positions to help them develop insight and provide leadership for monitoring these services in schools.

Beginning of 21st century witnessed an increase in student problems reported by media as well as a wide variety of new areas of concern like suicides, aggression, depression, anxiety, stress, violence, crime, drug and child abuse etc., Of course traditional concerns like academic performance, career and adolescent adjustment were also

prevalent. The government was also concerned with upheaval in students lives and guidance and counselling for students were demanded by all the concerned. During the decade, a series of programmes were organised to include large number of key guidance personnel in states. A programme was especially conducted for North-East states suitable to their needs. Using satellite technology, more than 400 guidance personnel from 24 states and Union Territories of the country were provided orientation. Then another strengthening effort was made to include all the stakeholders from all over the country including state level educational administrators, school principals, teachers, NGOs, guidance personnel from different institutions/ settings, teacher-educators, counsellor-educators, practitioners, etc., to share the platform and take up appropriate role in providing guidance and counselling services to students.

Besides orienting guidance personnel, attempts were also made to strengthen the guidance component in pre-service teacher training through a series of enrichment courses during 1990s in psychology for the psychology faculty of DIETs especially from DPEP states. Emphasis was on effective teaching-learning strategies, behaviour modification techniques, fostering child development and creativity, principles and techniques, of guidance and counselling. It was expected that teacher-educators will serve as catalysts to promote the idea of guidance at elementary school stage. Before that in late 1970s and during 1980s, a series of enrichment programmes in different states were also organised for secondary

teacher-educators and educational psychology faculty from SIEs, inter colleges, CBSE schools etc.

NCERT, since its inception, has also been providing consultancy in guidance and counselling to various kinds of organisations. Government and private schools, colleges, NGOs seek assistance in introducing guidance and counselling programmes in schools, setting up guidance cells, getting their staff trained and in organisation of specific guidance activities for students on careers. NCERT provided academic resources and assistance to state education departments and other professional training institutions to plan programmes for their staff. Guidance and counselling faculty at NCERT serve as resource persons in designing counsellor training programmes, preparation of materials and evaluation related activities.

Future Vision

NCERT would continue its efforts to strengthen state level guidance agencies for implementing guidance and counselling services in schools. Even *NCF, 2005* has categorically emphasised the need for strengthening guidance cells of SCERTs/SIEs. This is important at this stage because of the dismal condition of guidance and counselling services in schools and status at the state level. The states which used to be pioneers in implementing these services at school level and performing other responsibilities like research, training, development of psychological tests, guidance literature etc. are either not carrying out such work or doing minimal. Some states never initiated. The states which are still

providing these services to some extent require further encouragement and enrichment. The Council though have been continuously working towards strengthening/reviving these services as mentioned earlier, lack of financial resources, inadequate or untrained staff, lack of state level leadership are the stumbling blocks in states. Under Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), it is expected that states would be able to seek academic and financial assistance to systematically plan and implement guidance and counselling in the secondary schools. NCERT will prepare a template for SCERTs to augment guidance and counselling services in the states in the context of RMSA. This will help ensure minimum standards of guidance and counselling services in schools across the country. The states would be encouraged to depute suitable faculty/teachers to undergo professional training to meet the requirement of trained personnel at state, district and school level. This will help not only strengthen guidance services, but also help in bringing about changes in the perception of people about the nature and importance of guidance and counselling, and role of trained personnel. Emphasis would be on promoting guidance and counselling as an integral part of education, where teacher needs to be guidance minded to play his/her role and that guidance services for school students is the responsibility of all stakeholders in education. For this purpose, EDUSAT can be used to reach out in large numbers across the country.

The Council, being a research organisation, would continue to conduct

fundamental research as well as action-oriented research in the field of guidance and counselling. Promoting or financing such researches on identified themes could also be a possibility.

Diploma level training of teacher-counsellors/counsellors through distance/online mode would continue. It is expected that the demand for trained counsellors would increase particularly for quality training. NCERT may consider various options and bring in multitier models of training and expand in terms of study centres. Already requests from a few organisations seeking approval for setting up study centres have started pouring. Under these circumstances, the Council and its nodal department would have the major responsibility to provide leadership and assistance, as well as monitor the quality of training at various study centres, and devise ways and means for further improvement. The nodal centre may also conduct specialised short-duration courses on different themes of guidance and counselling to help capacity building of counsellor-educators and trained personnel.

The Council has already been emphasising that guidance and counselling must be provided by professionally trained persons. The counsellors need to be adequately trained in theory and specific areas of skill development corresponding to the needs, concerns and problems of secondary and senior secondary school students. Therefore, the Council would continue to emphasise the need to offer programmes in guidance and counselling by various organisations meeting certain standards evolved by

various international associations. Presently, a very few national level organisations, universities, state level organisations, private universities and NGOs are training counsellors for work in different settings and with diverse populations. It is expected that with increasing need and demand of guidance and counselling in schools, many organisations may be interested to train counsellors. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has already advised Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for making it compulsory to have counsellors in its affiliated schools. Also, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has been advised to initiate Diploma programmes in counselling so that adequate numbers of qualified counsellors are available for secondary and senior secondary schools. In this context, NCERT has already submitted the details of school counsellor's role and functions; common core learning experiences and competencies required in guidance and counselling curriculum; focus of course contents related to theory, practicum and internship; requirement of adequately trained/experienced staff, required physical and material resources, etc.

NCERT would work to ensure through MHRD that only adequately trained professionals in guidance and

counselling provide these services to school students. Not only that, the Council would also advice on the competencies of school counsellor which are required to be developed through Diploma Courses/Training Programmes offered/to be initiated by an organisation/university in the country. Assistance in planning and designing courses, planning infrastructure and training counsellor educators to provide quality training would be provided. NCERT during all these years has moved from face-to-face mode to distance mode, and from national to international level of the Diploma course. It already evolved from 'specialist' model of counsellor training to 'teacher as a counsellor model'. Therefore, NCERT would help interested organisations to plan and offer courses in both modes and models.

To ensure quality training, NCERT would work towards taking up the role of accreditation body for the country wherein it becomes mandatory for trained counsellors to get registered with the Council in order to be practicing counsellors. These steps are considered important/essential in view of untrained personnel practicing in the field.

In short, NCERT's efforts for more than five decades have not only promoted the guidance movement in the country but truly established it as a leader in the field.

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