

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF SUBJECT TEACHERS IN SOLVING EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF KARACHI

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ABSTRACT

Youth are supposed to be the backbone of any society; in fact, they are the future of the society and if they are educated and trained properly, they will become the asset. This study critically examines the problems of adolescent of secondary level students of Karachi. For this purpose, a critical review of existing literature was carried out. It is found that the main the problems of secondary level adolescent are disturbed personality syndrome, and it is due to the physiological and psychological changes they are experiencing at this stage. Psychological guidance and counseling is essential for students' preparation of future life. Generally, it is assumed that specialist counselors are responsible to perform this task but if subject teachers are provided sound knowledge of psychological guidance and counseling, they can play this role more effective.

Mix method research has been applied to conduct this research, and the population of the research was the teachers from private and public schools of Karachi. Purposive sampling was used to collect data. Data was collected through Survey method. A tailor-made questionnaire consisting closed ended questions for quantitative data collection and open ended questions for qualitative data was used.

Data was analyzed and it was found that teachers were of the view that students feel convenient in sharing their personal and educational problems with their subject teachers. They were also of the view that teachers should include moral education in their daily lesson plan and should do regular assessment of the students to know their problems, and solve them proactively rather than reactively. Therefore, it is recommended that subject teachers should be provided in depth knowledge of educational psychology and be assigned the task to deal with the students accordingly.

Keywords: Guidance and counseling, subject teachers' role, adolescent age, secondary level, general counselor, educational problems, physiological and psychological problems.

INTRODUCTION

The sensitive and most energetic stage of the youth is when they are in their adolescent age; this is the age when they are most probably studying in secondary stage of their educational process. It can be traced from the educational progress, whether these students are facing some sort of educational problems due to the physical and or psychological changes, which they cannot cope up with individually, and would like to have help of someone close, with whom they can discuss their problems. These physical and psychological changes results in problems such as sudden mood shifting, shyness, not able to concentrate, difficulty in taking decisions etc. Owing to the taboos attached to the society, they mostly do not talk to their parents or older siblings about their problems of physical and psychological changes, and end

up in asking for help to their friends who themselves are inexperienced, and thus the problem aggravates. The only other person who is in regular interaction to the young student is the subject teacher. The subject teachers are in regular contact with the teens and if they have proper knowledge of guidance and counseling, they can provide effective help to the students, and help them out of problems they are facing, thus improving their educational progress, and the development of a balanced personality. The global paradigms are changing very fast, technology is overpowering our sense of thinking, information explosion has mesmerized us and especially the youth of the society who now think, act and react the way their favorite personalities do on the media. Electronic and social media are fast taking over the emotional control of the youth specially children in their adolescent age studying at secondary level. The youth are the future of a society, the better the mental and physical development of the youth the better the prospect of a brighter society. The world is turning out to be a global village and each person is playing its role, either positive or negative, to make it a better place to live, or vice versa. The most important, as well as the worthiest of man's duties is education. Man, discovered the value of education at the very dawn of his existence. For the same reason, he laid down certain principles and objectives that commensurate with the development of his real duties and mission in life, though these objectives were sometimes correct and at times misconceived.

We clearly witness the amazing changes brought about during human history by the various schools of thought that totally altered the features of life. Our study of the world's realities makes us arrive at the conclusion that man has not been created evil and satanic by nature. Were we to accept that man is inherently evil, all the efforts to educate him would be fruitless and futile and the endeavors and efforts of all the divine prophets and worlds educators would be an exercise in futility. It is true that man is confronted with physical forces such as media, environment, friends, society, and nonphysical forces such as urges and desires at every stage of its life. These forces affect both physical and spiritual upbringing of the student, and to counter the negative effects of these forces and to develop a balanced personality, effective external assistance, care and guidance is required.

“Guidance is the systematic professional process of helping the individual through education and interpretative procedures to gain a better understanding of his own characteristics and potentialities and to relate himself more satisfactorily to social requirements and opportunities in accord with social and moral values.” (S. Kochhar, 2006) pp. 14

Of course, such external assistance is not something unnatural or imposed but a part of the human nature. It is similar to helping a child to learn speech although it possesses the natural capacity for speech since the day of its birth. Thus, proper guidance and counseling can enable a student to be moderate by identifying the two extremes and avoiding falling in the hands of external as well as internal forces of destruction. Of course, the influence of environment is not the same on different brains with their different neurological makeup, in the same way as environment does not have a similar effect on the growth of different plants and herbs. Every individual life with his own neurological make up which he has inherited in accordance with the law of heredity. No two individuals in the world have an identical neurological structure and makeup and they tangibly exhibit a difference from the view point of individual physiology and bodily hormones. Hence, in the same way as an environment affects every seed and plant in a specific manner so also its effect on everybody brains neurons is also specific, in the sense that life in a particular environment has a specific effect on every individual and produces a particular personality which is not comparable with that of another individual. Thus, we understand that secondary stage students in their adolescent age are very sensitive to the external forces as well as internal forces and they may affect

them in different ways as per the mentality, ability, inclination and aptitude of the students. Adolescence is time of important changes in the structure and function of the brain; other than the first three years of life, no other developmental stage is characterized by more dramatic changes than the adolescence. For years, the “roller coaster” of adolescence was blamed on hormones. Recent advances in technology and research have led to the ability to “see inside” the adolescent brain; these studies indicate that the brain, not hormones, is responsible for teens’ thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Brain research is a new frontier, and studies show that neuroscience has had little impact on the institution of education (Blakemore & Frith, 2005). Role of the teacher comes into play now as they are the person in regular contact with the students and apparently do not pose a threat of a student being labeled a psychopath or an abnormal person if counseling side by side teaching by understanding the shortcomings and the challenges faced by the student by observing his or her activities and academic progress through regular formative and summative assessment as well as informal unobtrusive assessment. “Hamblin (1971) rejects the dichotomy between teaching and counseling because it denies the importance of creative teaching skills in counseling. He seeks further support for conceiving of teaching and counseling as a unified enterprise, pointing out that counseling need not be tied to conventional casework methods, and that group counseling and group guidance are available as alternatives to such methods. The researcher like Hamblin, opposes any notion that counseling and teaching might be separate professions. The researcher draws an analogy with medicine, arguing that counselors and teachers are members of a single profession in the same sense that a surgeon and a psychiatrist are. Williams (1973) employs essentially pragmatic arguments to support the case that teaching and counseling are essentially unified activities. Indeed, he sees serious consequences in trying to split school staff ‘into bad punishing figures (teachers) and warm sympathetic counselors.

The role of a teacher and a counselor are intertwined and cannot be separated for the betterment of the students’ overall growth, both physical and spiritual, so that a balanced personality is developed to face the challenges of the practical future life. Although a specialized counselor seems more effective for its in depth knowledge and expertise of counseling and guidance field, the best he can do, other than counseling the students is to help the teachers in counseling the children, as to how to identify the challenges of the students and act or react effectively and efficiently.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Students at secondary level face several emotional problems such as withdrawal, making and breaking of friend-ships, lack of decision making power, demanding self-respect, behaving like an adult as well as a child for being in the state of a crossroads at their adolescent age, etc. and if these issues are not addressed proactively and reactively at the appropriate time, such problems become part of their personality.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Can subject teachers help students in facing educational and psychological problems by using knowledge of guidance and counseling?

NULL HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant effect of subject teacher’s knowledge about basic guidance and counseling principles in solving educational and psychological problems of the students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mixed approach was used in this research study. The target population was the in-service teachers of both public and private sector schools of Karachi, who are teaching different subjects varying from Islamiyat to biology to English to math and so on, to secondary level students. Purposive sampling techniques were implied in this study. Four schools were selected, one from public sector, and the remaining three private schools that also included a convent school to have diverse opinions and views. Eighty-five teachers were selected as sample including fifty six were female teachers and twenty nine male teachers teaching both male and female secondary level students answer the research questions and who are “information rich” persons. Chi-square one tailed was used to analyze the data.

DISCUSSION

Research Question: How can the subject teachers help the students facing educational and psychological problems by using knowledge of guidance and counseling principles?

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant effect of subject teacher’s knowledge about basic guidance and counseling principles in solving educational and psychological problems of the students.

Analysis of the Problem

1. H0: $F_0 = F_e$
2. H1: $F_0 \neq F_e$
3. $\alpha = 0.05$

(Whereas H0 is null hypothesis, H1 is research hypothesis, F0 is observed frequency, Fe is the expected frequency, α is the level of significance, and df is the degree of freedom.)

4. Test Statistics is Chi Square one-tailed $X^2 = \sum (F_o - F_e)^2 / F_e$ (Whereas \sum is sum, F0 is observed frequency and Fe is the expected frequency)

5. Decision Rule

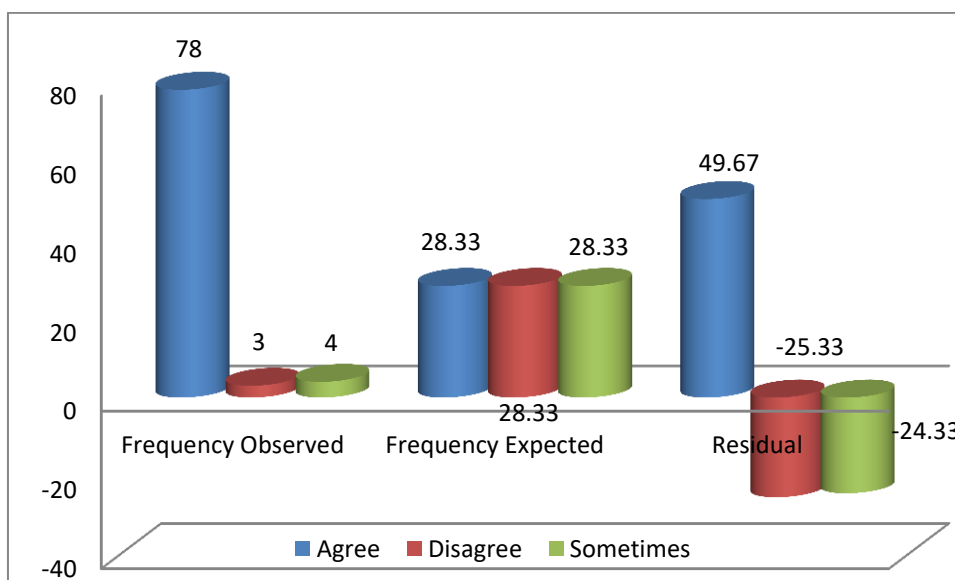
Null Hypothesis will be rejected if computed value \geq tabulated value

Subject Teachers may know the Basic Guidance and Counseling Principles for Solving the Students Educational and Psychological Problems.

Table 1. Tabulated Representation

Options	Frequency Observed	Frequency Expected	Residual
Agree	78	28.33	49.67
Disagree	3	28.33	-25.33
Sometimes	4	28.33	-24.33
Total	85	85	

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



Test Statistics: Subject Teachers should know the Basic Guidance and Counseling Principles for Solving the Students Problems.

Chi-square= 130.67
 df = 2
 Level of Significance: 0.05
 Tabulated Value = 5.991
 Computed Value = 130.67

Conclusion: Referring to the table of Chi-Square (One-tailed), we find that tabulated value is 5.991 with df = 2 at $\alpha = 0.05$ is less than the computed value 130.67. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is significant effect of teacher’s knowledge about guidance and counseling principles in solving student’s educational and psychological problems.

Number of questions were asked to verify the hypothesis, which as under including results

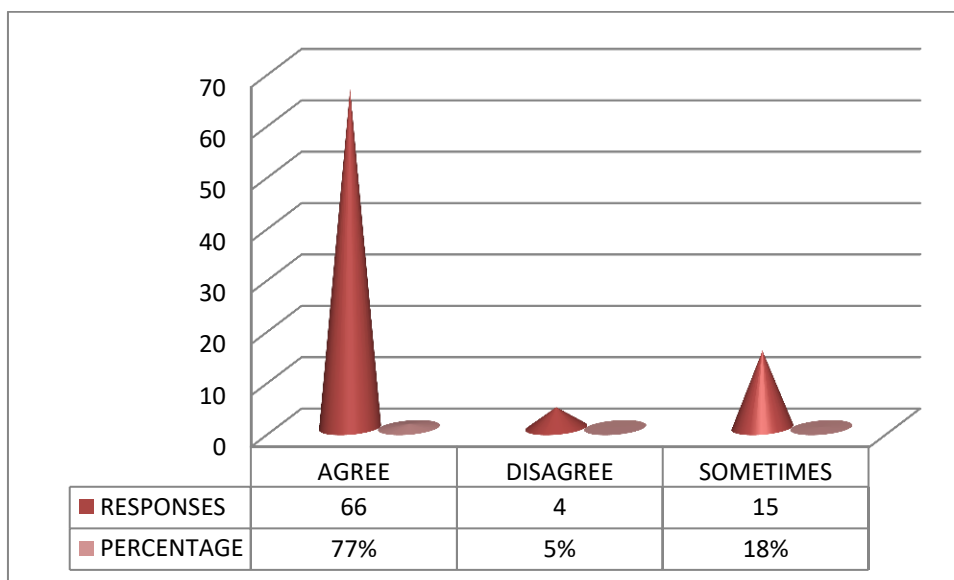
Items Supporting the Hypothesis.

Item 1: Personality Development Requires Regular Guidance and Counseling.

Table 2. Tabulated Representation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Agree	66	77%
Disagree	4	5%
Sometimes	15	18%

RAPHIC REPRESENTATION



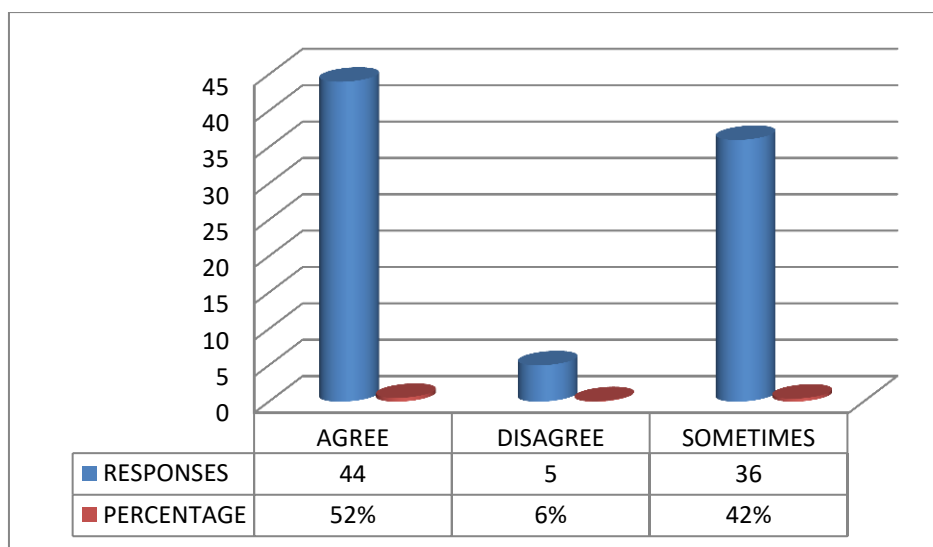
Outcomes of the tabulated and graphical results through percentage suggest that majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that personality development of a secondary students requires regular guidance and counseling.

Item 2: Students Feel Easy to Consult Subject Teachers for Their Day to Day Problems.

Table 3. Tabulated Representation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Agree	44	52%
Disagree	5	6%
Sometimes	36	42%

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



Outcomes of the tabulated and graphical results through percentage suggest that majority of the teachers were of the view that students of secondary stage feel easy to consult their

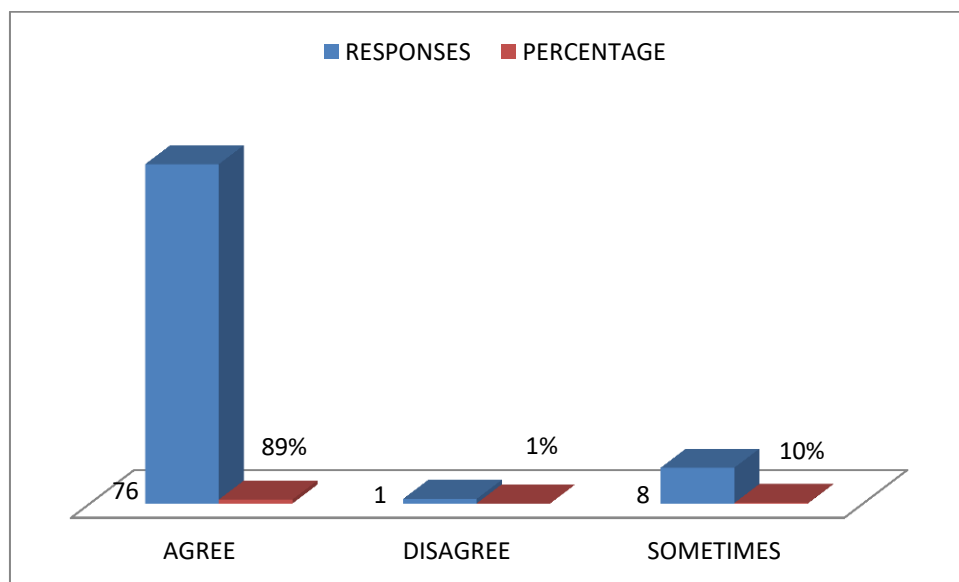
subject teachers with their day to day problems but a sizeable number suggested that sometimes they do feel easy.

Item 3: Subject Teachers should have Awareness about the Problems that Students can face during the Educational Process.

Table 4. Tabulated Representation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Agree	76	89%
Disagree	1	1%
Sometimes	8	10%

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



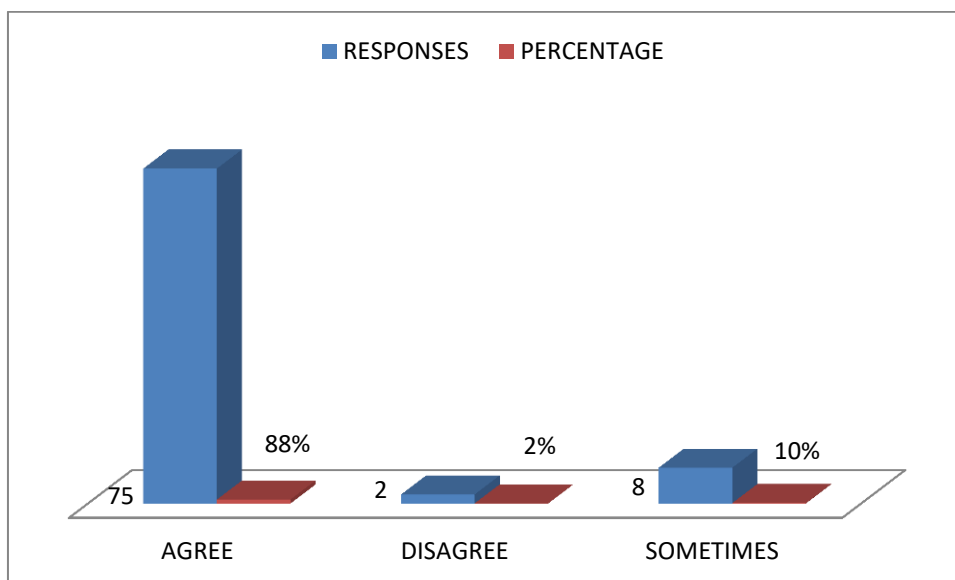
Outcomes of the tabulated and graphical results through percentage suggest that majority of the respondents were of the view that subject teachers should have awareness about educational and general problems that a secondary stage student can face during the educational process.

Item 4: Subject Teachers should have a Basic Knowledge of the Educational and General Psychology.

Table 5. Tabulated Representation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Agree	75	88%
Disagree	2	2%
Sometimes	8	10%

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



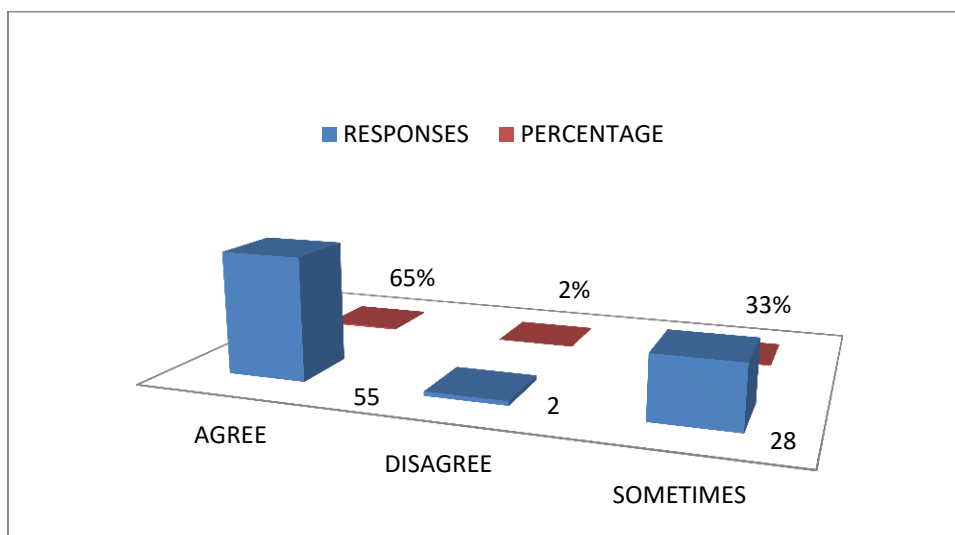
Outcomes of the tabulated and graphical results through percentage suggest that majority of the teachers were of the view that subject teachers should have a basic knowledge of educational and general psychology to solve the psychological problems of the secondary level students.

Item 5: Subject Teachers Role is very important at Adolescent age.

Table 5. Tabulated Representation

Options	Responses	Percentage
Agree	55	65%
Disagree	2	2%
Sometimes	28	33%

GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION



Outcomes of the tabulated and graphical results through percentage suggest that majority of the teachers were of the view that subject teacher's role is very important when the students are in their adolescent age but a sizeable number of teachers were uncertain about it.

Open-ended question was asked to have personal point of view of the respondents about the role of subject teacher in guidance and counseling of secondary school students, the results of the responses are as under:

Open-ended asked question: Mention some major psychological issues students face at secondary level and how do you address them ?

There were some very interesting answers to this item as teacher had a variety of experiences in this area. One of the responses of the teacher was that:

"Some students acquire negative techniques to gain attention such as developing relationship with opposite sex or creating problems for the opposite sex, and it is the teacher's responsibility that he/she should realize this and shall fill this attention vacuum by providing individual attention to the students."

Once again it is noticed that the view of the teacher is due to the sensitive age era of the student where they want individual and undivided attention and want to be listened, to what they have to say regarding their problems, ideas, fantasies and progress. Some other psychological related issues pointed out by the respective teachers were ego problem, feeling of independence, misconduct, bullying, frequent emotional and mood changes, inappropriate social activities, self-respect, confused, technology attachment, shyness, and disrespect by others specially parents and siblings. One of the teachers said that:

"The negative effect of seeking attention of opposite sex is the area in which students shall be guided by the teacher so that they may realize problems related to it. The parents shall be called upon by the teachers and asked to fill the vacuum by giving proper attention."

When we go through the major issues pointed out by the respective teacher's one psychological area is more prominent, and it is self-respect and self-recognition. This area is more complex when students are in their adolescent age and are having so many ideas and fantasies to share which he or she can't share with parents or siblings thus end up in sharing them with friends and they are moreover of opposite sex for want of attention and respect. In this case the female students are moreover exploited by their male counterparts for the girls are inexperienced and get in the trap easily. If parents specially father develops a friendly atmosphere in home and develop a habit of conversing with the wards the situation will be a lot better but in absence of an ideal environment it is the teacher who fill the gap and listens to the students.

DISCUSSION

Subject teachers are the "most in contact" person with the students, and students develop liking for a specific teacher may that be because of his or her teaching style, or talking style, or personality traits. But it is sure that students do develop a sense of proximity with certain teachers and feel easy to talk to them about their personal and educational problems. If such a teacher is having sound counseling and guidance background, and understands the psychology of the adolescent age, he or she can provide the student with effective feedback that may prove effective enough for the student to overcome the challenges he or she is facing in life. This will enable the students to complete the education with peace of mind and help them to gain emotional maturity to decide about their future life that is full of challenges, enabling them to become a good citizen of the society, and a contributor to the wellbeing of the country. There are many psychological issues a student faces in its

secondary schooling other than educational problems, such as lack of parental attention, demand of self-respect, confusion about what to do and what not to, hormonal change, good or bad friendship etc., in fact all the other factors combine, effects the teaching learning process. Subject teachers shall be having enough knowledge of educational psychology of the students to understand student's problems, that the students face in their secondary stage, and should judge their aptitude and attitude proactively to guide them appropriately and accordingly. Hence subject teachers shall be provided with appropriate knowledge about educational psychology so they can guide students through guidance and counseling, by assessing them in such a way in the ongoing class or any other place where the students are busy in educational activities, such as the playground or laboratory or a library that students may not know about it, and shall always act normally. This will help the teachers to have actual assessment results. This is not possible if, the student is approached by a general counselor for guidance and counseling in its own settings, where the students feel uneasy, and either act or reacts in an unnatural way.

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