

## **Efficacy of Counselling Services For Reducing Emotional and Behavioural Disorders among School Students: A Cross-Sectional Study**

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### **Abstract**

In the present competitive world students are experiencing great stress, which eventually deteriorates their mental health and well-being. Recognizing mental health concern for students, counselling services (CS) in schools have been emphasized utmost to support the mental health and wellbeing of students. In aforesaid outline, the present cross sectional study was designed to examine the significance of counselling services in schools for emotional and behavioural outcomes of students. The sample of students (N=60) was constituted with two sub-groups based on availability of counselling services in their schools (Available & Unavailable), and were compared on their emotional and behavioural outcomes. Emotional and behavioural outcomes was distinguished by internalizing (Int), externalizing (Ext) and neither internalizing nor externalizing (NINE), which was measured on Youth Self-Report; Broad-Band Syndrome Scale (YSR), developed by Achenbach T.M. and Rescorla L.A. in 2001. Result under t-test (independent) analysis for Int ( $t = 3.312, p < .01$ ), Ext ( $t = 2.31, p < .05$ ), and NINE ( $t = 2.697, p < .01$ ) revealed prevalence of emotional & behavioural problems such as anxiety, depression, somatic complains, rule breaking behaviour, aggression, social and thought problems are significantly

more pronounced for students those are not getting counselling services in their schools as compared to other group of students.

**Keywords: Counselling Services (CS), Internalizing (Int), Externalizing (Ext), Neither Internalizing Nor Externalizing (NINE).**

### **Introduction:**

Counselling is elucidated as an enlightened process of helping an individual by facilitating positive adjustment and growth through self-awareness, self-direction, and self-acceptance. Hence, the central discipline of this study is the significance of counselling for emotional and behavioural outcomes in school going students [Anvyi, 2017].

Recent developments in research have shown the growing need for counselling, amongst students as children and adolescents are at risk of developing and experiencing various mental health problems such as emotional and behavioral disorders that are defined as an emotional disability based on the following criteria such as firstly, an inability to build or prolong a satisfying interpersonal relationship. Secondly, display of pervasive moods such as depression or extreme unhappiness. Thirdly, a manifestation of tendencies to develop pain, physical symptoms or unreasonable fears affiliated to personal or school problems [Aviles, Anderson, & Davila, 2006]. Furthermore, emotional and behavioural problems are divided into three subgroups namely internalizing (Int) behaviour that is explained as exertion taken out towards oneself [Perle, Levine, Odland, Ketterer, Cannon, & Marker, 2013], externalizing (Ext) behaviour is described as displaying acts of violence and aggression on individuals around them [Liu, 2004] and neither internalizing nor externalizing (NINE) problems. The type of complication often differs by the age group the child belongs to, and accordingly, it incorporates anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, aggression, rule-breaking behaviors, and attention deficits [Achenbach, & Edelbrock, 1978].

Research up to date has revealed that emotional and behavioral problems in students are an increasingly important issue for parents and institutions. Recent developments in the field of counselling have shown that Institutions such as schools play a permanent role in a child's life and can meet their social and emotional needs, with the help of thorough communication

between the educators and mental health professionals known as school counsellors. It is reported that counsellors that are capable of recognizing how emotional and behavioral development have an influence on academic results can easily distinguish students exhibiting emotional and behavioral abnormalities and therefore provide appropriate facilities to resolve these issues [Aviles, Anderson, & Davila, 2006].

According to the past study conducted by Ruth (2018), guidance and counselling programme assists students in harmonizing their abilities and enable them to develop their full potential. Counselling service in the guidance programme of schools or educational institution is strongly dedicated to generate self-awareness, self-direction and self-realization in the pupil or client. It has been conclusively shown as school counsellors help in understanding students' emotional concerns due to their personal issues such as family problems, relationship issues, and environmental stress along with individuals who possess behavioral difficulties by providing them moral support and guidance that shows a notable difference in their overall performance. Furthermore, it shows that school learning environment with the help of counselling is required to help develop children in such a way that they are capable of understanding their peers feelings and viewpoints, exercising emotional and behavioral self-control and resolving disagreements constructively. Later on, these qualities in a child ensures a healthy learning atmosphere alongside their peers [Klein, 2002].

A considerable amount of literature reveals that schools that provide counselling help the children enhance their decision-making skills, they have comparatively lower drop out rates than other schools, children have better social and emotional skills due to the behavioral therapy classes, improved physical health, and wellness and improve their academic outcomes. [Maag & Katsiyannis, 1996]. Thus, counselling in schools plays an essential role for students as it is a transformative process of helping students learn and improvising their emotional and mental well being [Anvyi, 2017].

Although there are ample of studies conducted on the significance of school counsellors its affects in the west but there are very few conducted in Asia, therefore in the current study the attempt was made to verify the role of school counselling services in emotional and behavioural outcomes on a sample of Asian students.

**Objective:**

To examine the significance of counselling services in school as a preventive approach for adolescents—

- Internalizing disorder
- Externalizing disorder
- Neither internalizing nor externalizing disorder

**Hypothesis:**

Counselling services in school will be significant as a preventive approach for adolescents—

- Internalizing disorder
- Externalizing disorder
- Neither internalizing nor externalizing disorder

**Method**

**Sample** - The present investigation was confined to the Sr. Sc School of Udaipur district, of Rajasthan. To select the sample, purposive sampling technique was taken into consideration as the selection of participants was based on availability of counselling services (CS) in their school. The whole sample consisted of 60 school going adolescents comprised under two sub-groups namely CS-Available (n=30) & CS Unavailable (n=30). Each group consist of equal number of male and female participants.

**Research Design**- Between group design (Two Independent group design) was used.

**Main Outcome Measure**—Youth Self-Report- TM (YSR) developed by Achenbach and Rescorla (2001) was used to assess the behavioural and emotional problems. This scale is used to identify emotional and behavioral problems in three groups namely i) Internalizing (Int), ii) Externalizing (Ext) and iii) Neither internalizing nor externalizing (NINE) problems amongst 11-18 years. The Problems identified by YSR have been found to be very consistent with DSM-IV diagnostic criteria.

**Procedure** - The sample of students (N=60) was constituted with two sub-groups based on availability of counselling services in their schools (Available & Unavailable). The schools were located in Udaipur city of Rajasthan. These students were oriented about the purpose of study and was assure about confidentiality of their responses and results. After getting their consent they were administrated on YSR. Before administrating the test they were well versed with the instruction of this test. Hereafter data was obtained by specific scoring pattern standardized for test. The obtained data was analysed under t test analysis with the help of SPSS.

## Result and Discussion

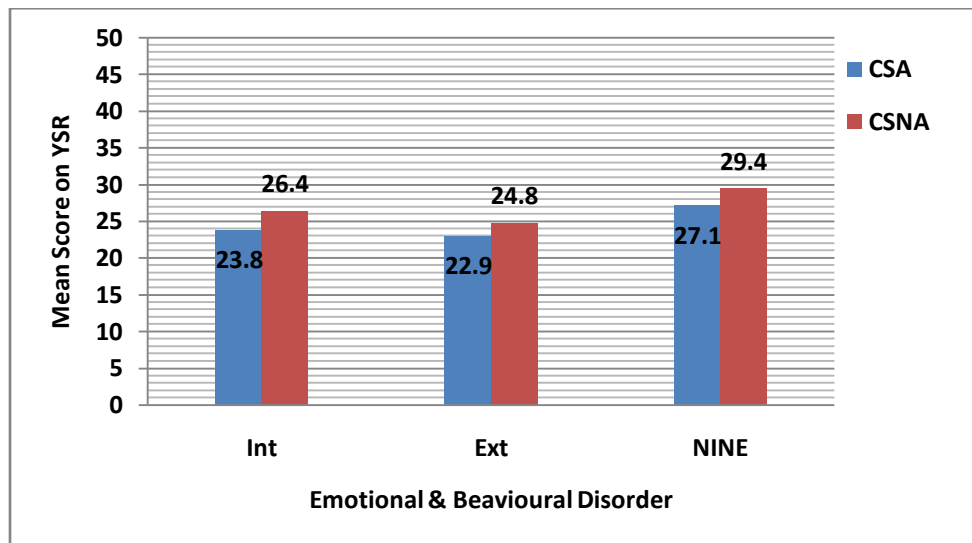
The aim of the present research was to ascertain the significance of counselling services (CS) on emotional and behaviour outcomes of students by comparing two groups of students based on availability of CS in their schools ie CS available and CS unavailable. Emotional and behavioural outcomes were measured on Int, Ext, and NINE problems comprised under YSR-BBSS. The result under descriptive and t-test (Independent) analysis presented in Table 1.

**Result Table-1**

**Summary of t-test Analysis for status of counselling Services in School on measure of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (YSR)**

| YSR         | Counselling Services Available |      | Not Available |      | df | t-value | p       |
|-------------|--------------------------------|------|---------------|------|----|---------|---------|
|             | Mean                           | SD   | Mean          | SD   |    |         |         |
| <i>Int</i>  | 23.83                          | 4.36 | 26.43         | 5.27 | 58 | 3.312   | 0.001*  |
| <i>Ext</i>  | 22.93                          | 5.63 | 24.78         | 5.26 | 58 | 2.31    | 0.022** |
| <i>NINE</i> | 27.11                          | 5.94 | 29.43         | 5.76 | 58 | 2.697   | 0.007*  |

\* Significant at .01 level, \*\*Significant at .05 level.

**Figure- 1****Graphical Representation for status of counselling Services in School on measure of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (YSR)**

Result table 1 evince, t values are significant for Int ( $t = 3.31$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Ext ( $t = 2.31$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and NINE ( $t = 2.69$ ,  $p < .01$ ) problems among students in relation to the availability of counselling services in their schools. More precisely in support of descriptive values for respective measures of emotional and behavioural outcomes (YSR) revealed that-

Internalizing outcomes, comprises of those problems that are mainly within the self, and are expressed as anxiety, depression and somatic complain symptoms are verified as less dominating among students those are being assisted for their self-awareness and self-direction through personal counselling under counselling services. Moreover in the past study it was revealed that international school students stipulated higher rates of depressive and anxiety symptoms and hence they are more likely to potentially benefit on providing counselling services [Ammigand, Drexlerd, Williamsonb, & Guerra, 2019].

In regards to externalizing outcomes, that mainly involves conflicts with other people and their expectations, and are reflected in rule breaking behaviour and aggressiveness, the finding divulged that students those are not assisted under counselling services in their schools display higher incidence of behavioural disturbance like breaking rule, lying, cheating, disobedience,

arguing, destructing things, stubborn, demanding and so on. Comparison with the prior studies also revealed that students with behavioural deficits, who are not intervened with proper guidance and counselling services due to the lack of response from school administration exhibits persistent patterns of externalizing syndromes such as stealing, lying, running around, etc (Arfasa & Dano, 2019).

While examined significance of CS for NINE, which comprises social, thought and attention problems, it is found to be remarkably higher for students those are not benefited by CS as compared to those getting advantages of these counselling services in their schools. To conclude counselling services in schools substantiated as a significant preventive approach for emotional and behavioural outcomes of students.

With the increasing complexities due to globalisation, advancement of science and technology, gives rise to cut-throat competition and stress in students life. Furthermore, breaking down the social support system emphasises the need of counselling services to assist the growing children and students in order to meet the demands of stressful life in educational setting. Counselling services under guidance programme in school refers to a process of assistance, which aims at making the student i) Self-understanding of one's strengths, limitation and other resources; ii) Self-accepting of situation and reality and iii) Self-directing to solve problems, making choices and decisions. In general the goal of counselling services for students in educational setting is to facilitate the behavioural changes, helping students to resolve their issues, enhance student's effectiveness and ability to cope with life demands, promoting the decision making process and facilitating and empowering the students to develop their potential to face challenges of each area in life.

The present study assessed the significance of counselling services for students emotional and behavioural outcomes by revealing fewer incidences of internalising, externalising and NINE problems for students those are benefited from counselling services in their school. On the contrary, students who were not provided with counselling services displayed insignificant results and revealed that students show major emotional, behavioural, social and cognitive problems. Consistent with the present finding, [Fazel, Hoagwood, Stephan, & Ford, 2014], reported that students receiving counselling in schools show comparatively better display of

behavioural and emotional outcomes due to the professionals delivering accurate interventions and introducing therapeutic modalities that is required for the students belonging to different age groups. Altogether, it was discovered that counselling services is a facilitative approach for emotional and behavioural outcomes and hence paving a path for psychological well-being amongst students.

The present findings, while preliminary, suggest role of CS is significant for emotional and behavioural development hence proving the stated hypothesis.

Strengths observed in the current study was that to highlight the need of counselling services for psychological well-being of future generation, simultaneously results obtained were initiative and extracted from a naturalistic setting. However, on the contrary, there was a limitation such as the participants were given the questionnaires which could have been manipulated on behalf of the younger age groups that leads to a false description of data.

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