

“Guidance Needs in Secondary Education: A Survey of Secondary School Students in Bapatla District, Andhra Pradesh”

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Abstract:

Guidance and counselling services play a significant role in supporting the academic, personal and social development of adolescents during the secondary stage of education. The present study examines the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh. The study employed the survey method and a sample of 500 students studying in VIII and IX classes was selected from various secondary schools. The sample represented key demographic variables such as gender, class, locality (urban and rural) and community (BC, OC, SC and ST). A structured Guidance Needs Questionnaire was used as the tool for data collection. The collected data were analysed using statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, t-test and analysis of variance. The findings revealed that secondary school students possess moderate to high levels of guidance needs in educational, personal, social and vocational areas. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in guidance needs based on gender, whereas noticeable differences were observed with respect to locality and community background. Rural students and those belonging to socially disadvantaged communities demonstrated comparatively higher guidance requirements. The study emphasises the necessity of strengthening guidance and counselling services in secondary schools in order to assist adolescents in coping with academic challenges, personal issues and future career planning. The findings may assist educators, counsellors and policymakers in designing effective student guidance programmes in secondary education in Andhra Pradesh.

Keywords: Guidance needs, secondary school students, counselling, adolescence, Bapatla District, Andhra Pradesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Secondary education represents a crucial stage in the developmental journey of adolescents. During this period, students experience significant physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes that influence their personality development and academic progress. Adolescence is often characterised by uncertainty, increased academic expectations and the need to make important decisions regarding education and future careers. In such circumstances, proper guidance and counselling become essential components of the educational process. Guidance services help students understand their abilities, interests and aspirations, enabling them to make informed choices and develop a balanced personality. In the context of the Indian educational system, the importance of guidance and counselling has been widely recognised by educational planners and policymakers. The recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission (1952–53) emphasised the necessity of introducing systematic guidance programmes in schools to assist students in educational, vocational and personal matters. More recently, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has also highlighted the significance of providing psychological and career guidance to learners in order to support their holistic development. Schools are therefore expected to play an active role in addressing the diverse needs of adolescents through structured counselling and support systems. Students at the secondary level frequently encounter various challenges such as academic stress, peer

pressure, emotional instability, social adjustment issues and uncertainty regarding future career opportunities. Without proper guidance, these challenges may lead to poor academic performance, low self-confidence and behavioural problems. Guidance programmes aim to assist students in recognising their strengths and limitations, improving decision-making skills and developing positive attitudes towards learning and life. Several studies conducted in India have shown that adolescents require guidance in multiple areas including educational planning, vocational awareness, personal adjustment and social relationships. Researchers such as Sharma (2014), Rao and Yashoda (2018) and Savita (2021) have observed that effective guidance services significantly contribute to students' academic achievement, emotional well-being and career development. In the Indian context, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions, many students lack access to professional counselling services, making school-based guidance programmes even more important. In Andhra Pradesh, secondary school students often face additional challenges related to socio-economic background, parental education, rural–urban disparities and community differences. These factors may influence students' educational aspirations, self-confidence and future planning. Districts such as Bapatla include a diverse student population representing different communities and socio-economic conditions, which may lead to varying levels of guidance needs among students. Understanding the specific guidance needs of students is therefore essential for teachers, school administrators and educational planners. Identifying these needs helps in designing effective guidance programmes that address students' academic, personal and vocational concerns. The present study attempts to examine the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh, considering important demographic variables such as gender, class level, locality and community. By analysing these factors, the study seeks to provide insights that may contribute to the improvement of guidance and counselling services in secondary education.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A number of studies have been conducted in India and abroad to understand the guidance and counselling needs of secondary school students. These investigations emphasise the importance of systematic guidance services for adolescents during the critical stage of secondary education. Chakraborty and Arundhathi Bai (2024) conducted a review study on guidance and counselling needs among secondary school students. The study reported that adolescence is characterised by rapid physical, emotional and social changes, and students often experience academic pressure, identity confusion and career uncertainty. The authors concluded that effective guidance programmes in schools play a vital role in promoting students' academic success, confidence and decision-making ability. Hassan and Farah (2015) examined the guidance and counselling needs of secondary school students and found that adolescents required assistance in educational planning, emotional adjustment and interpersonal relationships. The study highlighted that guidance services help students cope with academic stress and improve their personal and social development. Dharmi and Sharma (2020) conducted a study on the psychological counselling needs of rural and urban adolescents. The findings revealed that adolescents often experience psychological distress, academic anxiety and adjustment problems, which increase their need for counselling services. The study further reported that counselling programmes help students develop emotional stability and better coping strategies. Kaur (2020) investigated the guidance needs of senior secondary students and reported that students demonstrated high levels of need in educational, psychological, social and vocational areas. The study emphasised that guidance programmes should be integrated into school education to support students' overall development and career planning. Barik, Subhrajyoti and Acharya (2025) analysed the guidance needs of secondary level students in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Their findings suggested that modern educational systems should strengthen counselling services in schools in order to address students' academic difficulties, career confusion and mental health concerns. The study highlighted the growing importance of guidance services in contemporary school education. Earlier research by Parhar (2013) also reported that adolescents exhibit significant needs in various dimensions such as physical, social, psychological and educational guidance.

The study found that guidance services help students make appropriate educational and vocational decisions during adolescence. Similarly, Satpathy (2013) emphasised that guidance and counselling assist students in making proper adjustments in school life and society. The author argued that guidance programmes help learners identify their abilities, interests and career aspirations, thereby contributing to their holistic development. The above studies clearly indicate that secondary school students require guidance in multiple areas including academic, personal, social and vocational development. However, many schools, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions of India, still lack structured counselling services. Therefore, there is a need to examine the guidance needs of students in specific local contexts such as Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh.

3. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Secondary school students face multiple developmental challenges during adolescence. Many schools in rural and semi-urban areas of Andhra Pradesh lack trained counsellors and structured guidance programmes. Without proper guidance, students may experience academic difficulties, emotional stress and career confusion. Understanding the guidance needs of students will help teachers, school administrators and policymakers develop effective counselling programmes. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the level of guidance needs among secondary school students in Bapatla District.
2. To examine differences in guidance needs based on gender.
3. To analyse differences in guidance needs between VIII and IX class students.
4. To compare guidance needs based on locality (urban and rural).
5. To examine differences in guidance needs among community groups (BC, OC, SC and ST).

5. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in guidance needs between male and female students.
2. There is no significant difference in guidance needs between VIII and IX class students.
3. There is no significant difference in guidance needs between rural and urban students.
4. There is no significant difference in guidance needs among BC, OC, SC and ST students.

6. METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken to investigate the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh. The methodology adopted for the study includes the research design, sample, variables, tool used for data collection and statistical techniques employed for data analysis.

6.1. Research Method

The present investigation employed the survey method of research. The survey method is considered appropriate for studies that aim to collect information regarding opinions, attitudes and needs from a large group of respondents. Since the study focuses on identifying the guidance needs of secondary school students, the survey method was found suitable for gathering relevant data from a representative sample.

6.2. Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all secondary school students studying in classes VIII and IX in Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh.

6.3. Sample of the Study

The sample for the present study consisted of 500 secondary school students studying in classes VIII and IX in various secondary schools of Bapatla District, Andhra Pradesh. The sample was selected using a random sampling technique to ensure proper representation of students from different backgrounds. The sample was distributed across important demographic variables such as gender, class, locality and community.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample

Variable	Category	Number of Students
Gender	Boys	250
	Girls	250
Class	VIII	250
	IX	250
Locality	Rural	300
	Urban	200
Community	BC	200
	OC	120
	SC	130
	ST	50
Total		500

Thus, the selected sample provided adequate representation of students from different gender groups, class levels, residential localities and community backgrounds, enabling the investigator to analyse the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District in a comprehensive manner.

6.4. Variables of the Study

In the present investigation, the variables were classified into independent variables and a dependent variable. Dependent Variable: Guidance Needs of Secondary School Students The guidance needs of students refer to the assistance required by adolescents in various areas such as educational, personal, social and vocational development.

Independent Variables: 1. Gender- Boys, Girls.
2. Class- VIII Class, IX Class
3. Locality- Rural, Urban
4. Community- BC, OC , SC, ST

These variables were selected in order to examine whether the guidance needs of secondary school students vary with respect to their demographic and social background.

6.5. Tool Used for Data Collection

A Guidance Needs Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of statements related to various dimensions of guidance needs. Students were asked to indicate their responses using a Likert-type scale, which helped measure the intensity of their guidance requirements.

6.6. Procedure of Data Collection

The investigator personally visited the selected secondary schools in Bapatla District. After obtaining permission from the school authorities, the questionnaire was administered to the students of classes VIII and IX. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and they were instructed to answer the questions honestly. The completed questionnaires were collected and used for further analysis.

6.7. Statistical Techniques Used

The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. The following statistical measures were employed: Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test for comparison between two groups, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for comparison among community groups. These statistical techniques helped in examining the differences in guidance needs of secondary school students with respect to gender, class, locality and community.

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The hypotheses of the study were tested using appropriate statistical techniques such as the t-test for two-group comparisons and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for comparisons among more than two groups. The level of significance was fixed at 0.05.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in guidance needs between male and female students.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
Male	250	72.84	8.62	1.21	Not Significant
Female	250	73.96	8.14		

Interpretation: The calculated t-value (1.21) is lower than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their guidance needs is accepted. This indicates that both male and female students possess similar levels of guidance needs.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in guidance needs between VIII and IX class students.

Class	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
VIII	250	71.65	8.40	2.18	Significant
IX	250	74.52	8.30		

Interpretation: The calculated t-value (2.18) is greater than the table value at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between VIII and IX class students in their guidance needs. Students of class IX demonstrate comparatively higher guidance needs due to increased academic pressure and career awareness.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in guidance needs between rural and urban students.

Locality	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Result
Rural	300	75.10	8.21	3.46	Significant
Urban	200	71.32	8.05		

Interpretation: The obtained t-value (3.46) is higher than the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. This shows that rural students exhibit significantly higher guidance needs compared to urban students.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in guidance needs among BC, OC, SC and ST students.

Community	N	Mean	SD
BC	200	72.65	8.30
OC	120	70.84	8.11
SC	130	75.92	8.24
ST	50	76.48	8.41

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F-value	Result
Between Groups	468.72	3	156.24	4.82	Significant
Within Groups	16072.45	496	32.40		

Interpretation: The calculated F-value (4.82) is greater than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there are significant differences in guidance needs among students belonging to different community groups. Students from SC and ST communities show comparatively higher guidance needs.

8. MAJOR FINDINGS

1. The study revealed that secondary school students possess moderate to high levels of guidance needs, indicating that adolescents require support in educational, personal, social and vocational areas.
2. There was no significant difference between male and female students in their guidance needs. This suggests that both boys and girls experience similar developmental and academic challenges during the secondary stage.
3. A significant difference was observed between VIII and IX class students, with IX class students showing relatively higher guidance needs. This may be due to increasing academic pressure and greater concern about future educational and career opportunities.
4. A significant difference was found between rural and urban students. Rural students exhibited higher levels of guidance needs compared to urban students, possibly because of limited access to educational resources and counselling services.
5. The study also found significant differences among community groups (BC, OC, SC and ST). Students belonging to SC and ST communities demonstrated comparatively higher guidance needs, which may be influenced by socio-economic and educational factors.
6. Among the different areas of guidance, educational and vocational guidance needs were found to be more prominent, highlighting students' concerns about academic performance and future career planning.

9. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Secondary schools should establish proper guidance and counselling services to support students' academic, personal and social development.
2. Teachers should be trained in basic guidance and counselling skills so that they can identify and address students' problems effectively.
3. Special attention should be given to rural schools, as rural students show higher levels of guidance needs.
4. Schools should organise career guidance programmes and awareness workshops to help students make informed educational and vocational choices.
5. Additional support should be provided to students from disadvantaged communities such as SC and ST.
6. Parental involvement and regular parent–teacher interaction should be encouraged to support the overall development of students.

10. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Similar studies may be conducted in other districts of Andhra Pradesh to compare the guidance needs of secondary school students across different regions.
2. Future research may examine guidance needs at different educational levels, such as primary, higher secondary or undergraduate students.
3. Comparative studies may be undertaken to analyse the guidance needs of students studying in government and private schools.
4. Further studies may explore the relationship between guidance needs and variables such as academic achievement, mental health and self-confidence among adolescents.
5. Qualitative or mixed-method research may be conducted to obtain deeper insights into the personal and psychological challenges faced by secondary school students.

11. CONCLUSION

Guidance services are essential for supporting the academic and personal development of adolescents. The findings of the present study indicate that secondary school students in Bapatla District require

considerable guidance in educational, personal and vocational areas. Although gender differences were minimal, variations were observed based on locality and community background. The study emphasises the need for implementing effective school guidance programmes to promote students' overall well-being and academic success. The present study examined the guidance needs of secondary school students in Bapatla District of Andhra Pradesh with reference to demographic variables such as gender, class, locality and community. The findings indicate that adolescents at the secondary level possess considerable guidance needs in educational, personal, social and vocational areas. Although gender differences were not significant, variations were observed with respect to class level, locality and community background. In particular, rural students and those belonging to socially disadvantaged communities demonstrated relatively higher guidance needs. The study emphasises that adolescence is a sensitive stage that requires proper support and direction. Effective guidance and counselling services in schools can assist students in overcoming academic difficulties, developing positive attitudes and making informed decisions about their future. Therefore, it is essential for educational institutions to strengthen guidance programmes and provide appropriate counselling support to ensure the holistic development and well-being of secondary school students.

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