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Date August 10, 1971

A DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED PERCEPTIONS REGARDING AN EFFECTIVE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

The review of pertinent educational journals published since January, 1965, was done to determine the special adolescent needs and characteristics which make junior high school students unique in counseling relationships. Investigations of the uniqueness of junior high school adolescents, the qualities of effective general junior high school education plans, the current guidance and counseling programs in junior high school, and the effectiveness of the current counseling programs were included in the study.

Junior high school adolescents face identity crises due to physical and psychological changes and need opportunities to explore their new feelings, interests, and perceptions in order to build a new self-concept. School personnel can structure general school curriculum and guidance and counseling programs which are designed to help the students build a new positive self-identity.

Important conclusions of the study include the following: (a) junior high school adolescents face identity crises in early adolescence due to physical and psychological changes; (b) adolescents need to develop new self-concepts during junior high school; (c) junior high school students need opportunities to explore their world; (d) school personnel aid the development of junior high school students with a curriculum which provides opportunities for students to explore their worlds.

Important recommendations of the study include the following: (a) educators who plan to work with junior high school students should be aware of the unique characteristics of these students; (b) studies made of junior high school students should have strict control of variables so results are significant and accurate.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

School personnel who work with junior high school age students are often perplexed by the behavior exhibited by these students. This period of maximum insecurity for the students is initiated by the beginning phases of physical maturation and subsequent psychological changes. Both junior high males and females are subject to feelings of inferiority and insecurity and seek ways to alleviate these feelings through peer approval which often results in a sacrifice of already established adult-child relationships with teachers and parents. An adult understanding of the need for this behavior due to the physical and psychological changes in the junior high school age students is a necessary part of effective school planning for these students during these uncertain, anxious years.

Junior high school students need to master effective developmental tasks and develop new self-confidences. School personnel, teachers, administrators, and counselors need to recognize the inadequacy feelings that their students experience and devise means to help students overcome these feelings. Sensitivity to students' identity problems is important in the development of effective school curriculum and outside activities.

This paper concentrates on the importance of the guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools. The writer feels that it

is essential for junior high school counselors to develop counseling programs that are based on an understanding of the unique psychological characteristics of this age group and attempt to effectively meet the special needs of this group.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to investigate the psychological characteristics of junior high school age students to determine the uniqueness of these students that must be considered in the development of a guidance and counseling program. The problem also includes an investigation of the effectiveness of current junior high school counseling programs to determine how adequately these programs have met the needs of the students.

Purpose of the Study

This study is important to the field of education as it attempts to synthesize available information on the uniqueness of junior high school students. This paper is a source of information on the special psychological characteristics and needs of junior high age students and a review of current programs of guidance and counseling in junior high schools structured to meet the students' needs. In addition to the study's importance as a source of information, the paper attempts to reveal problems that do require more research in the field of junior high school counseling. The study is also significant as a review

of innovations and experimental programs in junior high school guidance and counseling.

General Questions of the Study

The review of literature attempts to answer the following questions about the psychological characteristics of junior high school age students. What are the special psychological characteristics that are unique to junior high age students? In what ways do the psychological characteristics of junior high school males and females require a unique counseling relationship? How have the special psychological characteristics and needs of these students been met by school counselors in the junior high school in the past?

General Procedure of the Study

The problems of this study are solved by an extensive review of literature in the professional education journals published within the past six years. The investigation includes articles that have been written since January, 1965, to the present.

The study consists of a general review of present guidance and counseling activities in junior high schools, an evaluation of the effectiveness of these programs, and an investigation of the unique psychological characteristics of the junior high school age students that must be included in structuring effective guidance and counseling programs.

Limitations

The limitation necessary in this study is to narrow the material to be investigated to professional journals published within the past six years. The study only includes articles that have been published since January, 1965, on guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools.

Definition of Terms

1. A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproved by the society, and difficulty with later tasks (4:48).

2. Preadolescence is that period of life comprising the years just prior to pubescence, or the very early stages of pubescence (13: 304).

3. Adolescence is the period of human life distinguished by the maturation of the organs and functions of reproduction, extending from the onset of puberty to adulthood (13:13).

4. Puberty is the period of life or stage of development at which the reproductive organs mature and become capable of functioning and the secondary sex characteristics develop; the physiological stage marking the beginning of adolescence (13:319).

Summary

Because of the development of many bewildering physical changes and attitudes in junior high age students, educational personnel must recognize these feelings and devise means of meeting the students' special needs in the school curriculum.

A counseling program can be especially helpful in meeting the psychological needs of students; an effective school counseling program can be most effective if the program is designed to take into consideration unique psychological characteristics and needs of the students.

This paper investigates these special psychological characteristics and needs of the junior high students and organizes the information into a cohesive study that can be helpful to junior high school counselors in structuring effective guidance and counseling programs.

CHAPTER II

THE UNIQUENESS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The writer reviewed several articles in the professional education journals that contain information on the unique aspects of the developmental growth period of junior high school students. This period begins with the onset of physical maturation and is characterized by student uncertainty. The adolescents no longer enjoy the security of childhood and yet, have not reached the autonomy of adulthood. The in-between-age of adolescence produces frustrations for the students who need to develop new skills in interpersonal relationships and establish new identity. A changing world forces the students to abandon their roles played in childhood situations and adopt new modes of behavior in an attempt to discover their new identity. Adolescents facing the task of building new self-concepts and identities from the internal anguishes associated with adolescent frustrations need understanding and freedom to explore their new world.

Chapter II examines the uniqueness of adolescents and focuses on the internal struggles these students experience as they attempt to learn about their new world and find their place in it.

The junior high school student is keenly aware of his recent physical changes, a result of the beginning phases of physical maturation experienced by the preadolescent. These physical changes produce internal anguish for the boy or girl in early adolescence, and doubts

about himself or herself appear. As Lois Barclay Murphy (27:179) explained,

> . . . Adults, impressed by the child's growth-spurt, often forget that the external changes may bring a sense of bewilderment, insecurity or even unreality to the child, who is wondering what she will be like or how tall he will get and whether he can compete with other teenagers.

In addition to the bewilderment associated with these physical changes, the preadolescent feels that his entire world is changing and he is tumbling in space, unsure of where he will fit in the new world. This period of anxiety necessitates for the student a search for new meanings and an exploration of himself and his place in the world. According to Murphy (30:194), "He is becoming more aware of himself as a person and is concerned with questions that have to do with himself as a person and his identity as such." In this state of "becoming," the preadolescent needs to determine a new self-identity that will enable him to cope with the new world he faces. The junior high school student needs to develop a new self-concept that includes his views of his new appearance, his new emotional makeup, and his new environment, the junior high school.

The onset of physical maturation is in itself nearly overwhelming to a junior high student. As Murphy said, (27:179) "And just at this point of maximum insecurity of inner and outer self, the shift to junior high school brings added external threats to many children." The uncertainty and fear of the new school situation coupled with the

bewilderment associated with his new feelings perplex the student. This uncertainty is manifested by the adolescent's behavior when, according to E. B. McNeil (25:182), he

> . . . Appears in a hurry to leave his childhood and rush toward the apparently superior freedoms of the adolescent who seems mysteriously to be privy to the adult pleasures and privileges of sex, smoking, driving, drugs, and independence.

The in-between-age of adolescence is frustrating for the student and yet, this stage in development is important as the basis of the construction of a foundation on which to build a satisfactory self-concept.

Because of the physical and psychological changes, the world of the student has changed. In the words of M. J. Clute (9:117), "His whole world must be re-explored and re-evaluated. The adolescent knows not yet, his own identity--what it means to be a girl, what it means to be a boy." The world of the adolescent junior high school student is in a transition from a world in which he was sure of himself and he understood what was expected of him to a world in which he is struggling to understand and cope with the new situations with new meanings.

An understanding of the unique psychological and physical changes that a junior high student experiences should be a part of the training of anyone who is going to work with the preadolescent. To know that during early adolescence previously established adult-child relationships may be shaken and replaced by peer relationships is a

key concept for junior high school personnel to recognize. According to Murphy (25:201).

> During preadolescence, the well-knit pattern of a child's personality is broken up or loosened, so that adolescent changes can be built into it and so that it can be modified into the personality of an adult.

The disorganization at this stage of development is important, Fritz Redl (26:202) inferred, in order for the preadolescent to build an adolescent personality, not on the child personality apparent during the grade school years. During this period, Murphy (26:202) stated that "already developed standards and values lose their power and become ineffectual." The student becomes full of internal conflicts and, again according to Murphy (26:202), "the natural accompaniments of conflict will appear again; namely, anxieties and fears, on the one hand, and compulsive mechanisms of symbolic reassurances, on the other."

Social and personal role changes that adolescents experience, such as new peer relationships and family role development from the dependent child to that of an "in-between" child and adult status, causes a change in the adolescents' view of themselves. As B. H. Long explained, "New patterns of identification with parents, teachers, and peers may demand an altered conception of the self and social world" (24:211). The self-concepts of adolescents, how they view themselves, which influences their present behavior, in addition to future plans, undergoes a transformation during adolescence. Internal instability

produces a feeling of uncertainty for the adolescent; he experiences many changed perceptions of himself in relation to others in the world. Due to these changes in his perceptions about himself and the world which occur during adolescence, students adopt modes of behavior which may contradict usual modes adopted in childhood. These radical changes may be viewed by adults as bizarre if they do not understand the physical and psychological basis of this behavior transformation.

A study made by Barbara H. Long, Robert C. Ziller, and Edmund H. Henderson (22:210) involved a non-verbal method of measuring self-concepts based on the following criteria: self-esteem relative to other persons; dependency upon a group consisting of parents, teachers, and friends; power in relation to selected authority figures; centrality of self relative to friends; complexity of self; individuation of the self in relation to peers; and identification as measured by closeness to mother, father, teachers, and friends. The researchers (24:210) assumed that an individual's conception of himself in relation to others is a variable of psychological importance and that self-social concepts vary as a function of changes in the person and in his social environment. Long, Ziller, and Henderson structured the hypothesis that the adolescents' view of self in relation to others changes over time.

Specific findings in the Long, Ziller, Henderson study (24:210) of particular interest to counselors seeking to understand junior high

school students included a different behavior pattern, according to sex of the students. Boys seemed to show greater acceptance of others, possibly more than girls, because of the strict supervision of adolescent girls and resultant adherence to stricter lines of class distinction for girls. Girls in junior high school at the time of puberty showed a tendency to move away from people, a dramatic change because up until puberty, girls are very close to people. According to Long, Ziller, and Henderson (24:225):

> This separation from others appears for girls at the time when both physical changes related to approaching maturity and social changes related to the shift from elementary school to junior high school are occurring suggests that this may be a critical period or crisis in the development of the concept of self for girls.

But, as the researchers concluded, the self-esteem of girls rose at the end of the withdrawal period, with the resolution of this crisis of self-identity and personal relationships. The resolution of the identity crisis, according to Long, Ziller, and Henderson (24:226) promoted an "enhanced respect for the self and a renewed ability for the acceptance of others." Boys seemed to have fewer conflicts with parents during early adolescence in junior high school. Sex-differentiated behaviors exhibited by junior high adolescences are important for the awareness of counselors and other school personnel if they aim to understand their pupils.

Findings of this study (24) common to both sexes included a greater dependency of students until grade 9 which the researchers

(24:227) suggested may "reflect an increased socialization or social interest for the older child and adolescent." An increase in self-esteem continued during high school to grade 12 and seemed to indicate, in the words of Long, Ziller, and Henderson (24:228):

> . . . An integration into self-conceptions of the increased status of the older child and adolescent. An increase in self-evaluation with the increase in physical size and maturity and educational level may be an important aspect of the development of the self-concept, a development which permits and facilitates that transition from child to adult.

Adolescents place importance upon status. In the attempt to find their place in the social structure of junior and senior high schools, feelings of importance and worth are important. Adolescents who are able to establish themselves as worthy and valued in any respect are more apt to form positive self-concepts and profit from the turbulence of adolescence.

According to Hamed A. S. Zahran:

> The Self-Concept may be defined as: an organised, learned, cognitive and unitary configuration of conscious perceptions, conceptions and evaluations by the individual, of his Self as he actually is (Perceived-Self), as others are supposed to see him (Other Self) and as he would most like to be (Ideal-Self).

Zahran used this definition of the self-concept as an introduction of the importance of a positive self-concept to the psychological guidance of adolescents.

In a study of 220 adolescent boys and girls, aged 13-15, Zahran (43) concluded that the type of self-concept adolescents possess

determines their psychological adjustment. Results from his study (43:237) indicated that positive and accepting self-concepts are associated with healthy and psychological adjustments. Zahran (43) emphasized the importance of the influences of home environment and social situations on the development of self-concepts. The adolescents' perceptions of their family life and social roles are important determinants of the way adolescents view themselves and their worth.

Adolescent adjustments to their new school situation and new physical and emotional makeups constitute bewildering and confusing experiences. The adolescent adjustments are necessary in the comprehension of new expectations of the adolescents and are essential for satisfactory living during adolescence; childish roles do not meet the situations and expectations of students during adolescence. Usual roles of childhood are not adequate to meet the internal anguish of adolescence. The self-concept is the frame of reference that students from which they operate; the adjustments of the students to their new life is influenced by the type of self-concept assumed by the students. The junior high student needs to explore himself to discover how he feels, how he thinks, how he achieves, and in general, the kind of person he is. An accurate perception of the kind of person he is helps in a development of a positive, confident self-identity. School personnel who work in the junior high school situation need to

be aware of student questions and doubts and to structure a program that will give the student freedoms and opportunities to learn about himself. According to C. S. Partin (30:196), "Self-exploration that leads to a knowledge of what self is like may be very productive in terms of personal satisfaction and growth."

Despite the reputation of adolescence as a period of anguish and instabilities, this period is important to the development of the student. Many discoveries are made which are relevant for later life stages; the adolescent who has the opportunities to explore his world and learns about himself establishes a foundation on which to build a positive, realistic self-concept. David Norton (29) stated that adolescence begins with the discovery by the adolescents that they are agents of life. "And its (the discovery) impact is immense, for it transforms the world casting the whole of familiar existence in a new light" (29:24). This revelation then results in a re-examination and re-evaluation of his known world. As Norton explained (29:25):

> . . . The child discovers within himself responses which escape his given child identity, and he is led by these responses to the discovery of alternative world and life-styles. The entertaining of such alternatives is the work of adolescent exploration.

An adolescent experience of exploration and searching can be beneficial for later student development of open-mindedness and awareness of alternative plans of action and thought.

David Norton (29) recognized the importance of developmental stages in human growth and stated that no stage can be by-passed without detrimental results. "Unless each is lived through, the individual is halted here, condemned by one form of behavior or another to circle the void endlessly"(29:27). The period of adolescence is one step in the continuing development of human beings, and according to Norton, is characterized by exploration and self-discovery.

In the junior high school student's exploration of alternative life-styles and thought patterns the adolescent moves rapidly. Norton (29:28) stated that:

> His commitment to each new style appears a frightening total, but the rapidity of their succession is the clue to the defining of adolescence--the total absence of commitment except to the process of exploration itself.

Adolescent exploration is an important ingredient in successful decision-making later in life as it occurs during the growth period when life's possibilities and alternatives are disclosed. Thorough investigation of their world is essential for the development of adolescents.

An example of the prevalent misunderstanding of the adolescent student is an article written by Harry Kelly (21), which described the uniqueness of adolescent students as a suppressed minority group. Kelly (21) used the term minority group to describe these students because the following characteristics of suppressed minority groups are evident: an adolescent can be identified and distinguished from other

members of society; adolescents share common experiences, such as problems associated with physical maturation; parents and other authority figures suppress the activities of adolescents; many stereotypes exist about adolescents; adolescents aspire for the American ideals of equality; and many adolescents make attempts to reduce their minority status (21:634).

Other than a novel way of viewing adolescents, this article written by Kelly (21) contained implications about adolescent behavior that cannot be ignored. The new framework of description for the adolescent illustrated the status of adolescents in society and pointed to a reason for misunderstood adolescent students. In addition, sociological methods of reducing tensions among minority groups could be used in schools. In the words of Kelly (21:639-640):

> By understanding the plight of the adolescent, the administration can work within the community setting to reduce the social distance between the adult and the adolescent groups by (a) destroying stereotypes (b) reducing the number of frustrating and needless rules (c) developing schemes which involve the combined efforts of adults and adolescents (d) delegating more real individual and community responsibilities to youth, and (e) showing a willingness to treat youth as respected individuals.

Community action to aid youth in their development and understanding of life's possibilities is an aspect of the adolescent growth period with significant possibilities.

The junior high school student needs to feel esteemed and valued; he needs to have the freedom and opportunity to learn about

himself and his place in the adolescent world. Schools play a large role in the development of the preadolescent and to effectively meet the needs of the student in early adolescence, school personnel must develop programs that touch each student as an individual. The preadolescent starts to unravel his impressions of the adult and adolescent world in the junior high school; the school must present a program for these students based on the preadolescent's special needs to help him perceive the reality of the new world he faces.

CHAPTER III

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GENERAL EDUCATION

School personnel have an impelling responsibility to help their adolescent students profit from their experiences in junior high schools. Consideration of the special adolescent needs and characteristics is essential in the development of successful junior high curriculums, and in particular, guidance and counseling programs. Making opportunities for student exploration of their needs, interests, and abilities is a prime necessity of effective successful student programs. Schools have the responsibility of helping their students discover new meanings for their existence; students need to establish a new identity out of the complexities of physical and psychological changes initiated at the outset of adolescence. A review of general considerations involved in the establishment of general junior high programs, in particular, the guidance and counseling programs, constitutes Chapter III.

An effective junior high school plan for general education should be based on the unique preadolescent need to explore his world and discover its new meanings. A junior high school curriculum, according to Clute (9:114), ". . . can be the means by which these developmental tasks of growing-up can be facilitated and enhanced." Junior high school personnel must recognize this need for exploration of the student and allow each student opportunities to pursue his own interests

and to learn how he relates in the new adolescent world. The junior high adolescent needs to know what will be expected of him and his capacity to achieve these expectations.

Adolescence is a period of exploration for students and realistic, effective junior high school curriculums must provide opportunities for student questionings, and re-evaluations of traditional life expectancies. David L. Norton (29:29) believed that the educational aim of schools during these years of a student's life should be to "facilitate exploration of life's available modes."

Norton (29) was critical of the American educational system because he believed that the period of adolescence is not treated as autonomous by school administration and curriculum planners. In the words of Norton (29:30), "No recognition is accorded the distinctive values and responsibilities of adolescence, the autonomy of which is systematically violated by intrusions of values from periods before and after." An effective junior high school general education curriculum should acknowledge the unique needs of the adolescent to explore and examine his world, changed by his physical and social maturity and not simply try to help the student live through this bewildering and confusing growth period.

According to Norton (29:33):

> What is first of all required by an educational system which fosters personal growth is the recognition of the autonomy of the stage of adolescence, a recognition which finds programmatic

> expression in explicit protection of the period from the encroachments of the modes of childhood and adulthood. This means that during the adolescent years decision must be deliberately postponed in the interest of the free exploration which is the ground of reasonable future decisions.

School personnel who work with the junior high school student during this anxious period of development need a special understanding of the adolescent, and an appreciation of the significance of the growth period of adolescence. School personnel need to learn to not react to the adolescent emotional outbursts and unusual behavior with strict, nonflexible disciplinary measures in defense against an involvement in the searchings of the adolescent to find meaning in his now confused world.

In view of the disorganized personality makeup of the junior high school student, the psychological uniqueness of this age group is apparent. During this metamorphic stage of development, the adolescent finds a suitable meaning for his world and develops a realistic self-image. To facilitate the development in the junior high school student of a positive, realistic self-concept, school personnel may be helpful. Schools may provide opportunities for the student in early adolescence to explore his environment and his ability to meet the challenges of a changed world. In an article written by Partin (30:194) he used the National Association of Secondary-School Principals' definition of exploration, which was defined as:

> . . . That function of the junior high school which provides each student a breadth of experiences that will broaden his horizons, develop his interests, and identify his attitudes, strengths, and weaknesses in vocational, educational, and avocational pursuits.

In the writer's opinion, the more experiences available for students, the less confused he will feel; and an easier transition to the adult world can be made.

The activities in which students participate during junior high school are instrumental in the formation of his new identity. According to Clute (9:14), "Inasmuch as the junior high years represent that period of growing-up where change is most rapid and dramatic, it is viewed by many as the most crucial of all school periods." The school can help boost students through this period with opportunities to learn about themselves.

Morrel J. Clute (9) divided the major considerations necessary in effective junior high school general education plans into four areas which include uniqueness, basis of meaning, major developmental tasks of early adolescents, and the teacher as the general education.

The uniqueness of individual adolescents impels schools to provide an individualized approach to learning. In addition, uniqueness implies aloneness, a fact which Clute (9) emphasized makes the importance of human relationships more vital. "The general education program of a junior high school must make far more provision for this kind of interaction and exploration of meaning in human relationships" (9:115).

A provision for the different types of backgrounds of the students is an essential point for consideration in a framework of junior high school general education. According to Clute (9:116), "If experience is the basis for making personal meaning out of perception, then meaning will be different for every individual." Then students can obtain different significances and meanings out of the same school exercises. Teachers who deal with students of different, varied backgrounds need to realize that individual students obtain different meanings from school, and need to not expect the same reactions from the students.

Another area of importance in junior high school curriculums is inclusion of opportunities for the development of major developmental tasks of early adolescence. As Clute (9:117) stated:

> The important issue is whether or not the school recognizes the significance of this growth period and its implication for the formation of attitudes, values, and feelings which have much to do with how an individual fulfills a lifetime of needs for himself and others.

Schools need to base their programs on the recognition of the special characteristics and needs of adolescents during this growth period. The single most essential developmental task is the construction of an accurate estimate of one's worth and a self-concept which provides a frame of reference for all behavior. In Clute's words (9:118), "Whether or not a child develops feelings of being accepted, wanted, and worthy of being in school, will depend upon how his teachers

react to him, and what he believes their behavior means." This statement implied responsibility for junior high school teachers which cannot be overlooked or underestimated. The teacher is a significant figure in the education of junior high students as their perception and evaluation of teacher behavior determines to some degree how the students view themselves. According to Clute (9:119):

> We cannot carry on school practice that causes students to see themselves as failures, unwanted, and unworthy. The behavioral outcomes of this kind of experience is all about us, expressed in hostility, hatred, aleination, and fearful inadequacy.

Other investigations of junior high school adolescents have revealed significant data that school personnel need to consider. J. T. Sandefur and Jeanette Bigge concluded in their study (38:474) that school achievement of adolescents is affected by the number of school-related problems, the number of home and family, and personal social problems faced by the students. Teachers and other school personnel who fail to consider or recognize these environmental aspects of their students' lives neglect an important element in understanding the pupils they teach.

To help adolescents cope with the identity crises they face in a school situation, a junior high school counselor can be significant. Samuel H. Popper (32) believed that the counselor has potential, or in his terms, latent capacity, to be an institutional balance wheel in early adolescent education. The period of adolescence between

elementary school and high school is characterized by biological, psychological, and sociological changes with which guidance and counseling services can help students cope. Popper (32) felt that the junior high school programs had failed to meet the unique needs of adolescents, and that the latent role capacity of counselors can help alleviate this situation.

Popper (32) felt that the adolescent needed to develop significant interaction patterns with others in the school environment. According to Popper (32:236):

> These pupils are overwhelmed with self-adjustment problems, with the problems of an identity crisis, and with the still larger problem of ego resynthesis. Ego is now the all-absorbing interest of the early adolescent pupil, and alter--when alter is a teacher, a team of teachers, or the total school organization--is a "significant other" for the pupil only insofar as a relation with alter helps to reduce terrible personal anxieties of the identity crisis.

During the adolescent crisis period the student needs a relief from pressures of society so he can re-evaluate his world. Popper called for a "protective intervention" by school personnel, particularly counselors, in a junior high school program. The program proposed by Popper used teachers, under the expert assistance from the counselor, in classroom guidance. Teachers were the center of the junior high guidance wheel, supplied with the "specialist" information from the counselor. Popper (32:238) maintained that the criticalness of personal guidance in the junior high school requires a team effort,

involving teachers, as well as counselors. Such cooperation could alleviate the present inability of the schools to provide the confused, anxious adolescent with significant relationships with others and fulfill the needs of students in the adolescent period with the help of a rest from outside pressures.

Attempts made to revitalize junior high school programs and general education plans to increase effectiveness have centered in a controversy of school structure. This paper did not examine the benefits of middle school organization in comparison with effective junior high school education plans, yet an article written by Robert W. Heller and James C. Hansen (16) considered implications for guidance and counseling programs in middle schools and has significance to this discussion of junior high school education programs.

In this article, written by Heller and Hansen (16:211), the aim of middle schools was emphasized to be to help students "gain a sense of self-identity and an inner stability that will allow them to make the transition from preadolescence." The impetus behind the middle school movement is a belief that the junior high school has failed to meet the special needs of adolescents and the authors enthusiastically supported the establishment of a middle school with a guidance program organized around the service areas of personality appraisal, information on occupations, counseling, and the service area which includes placement and follow-up. Heller and Hansen (16) maintained

that the guidance functions in the middle school could be integrated into the curriculum and the counselor

> . . . Assumes a leadership role in areas of diagnosing students' level of development, planning learning experiences to complement developmental stages, and re-orienting curricular patterns for alignment of flexible curricular structures (16:296).

The emphasis of this proposed guidance and counseling program on the development of the individual student's abilities and talents has significance in the building of junior high school general education plans.

A functional junior high school guidance program designed to be integrated into the total educational program is described by Wayman R. F. Grant, Sr. (14). The basic purposes of this program were to help the individual achieve up to his capacity, to help the individual meet and solve his problems as they arise, to help the individual lay a permanent foundation for sound, mature adjustments, and to help the individual to live a well-balanced life in all respects (14:255).

The individualized approach to guidance and counseling in junior high school to help each adolescent meet his problems with an identity crisis and form a positive self-concept is the challenge facing the junior high school under the fire of criticism from advocates of school structure change.

Guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools need to be based on the unique characteristics and needs of a preadolescent. An effective counseling program must attempt to help the student gain

an understanding of himself, his interests, and abilities, and his potential in the new adult world. Junior high school counselors work with a student through the years that, according to Clute (9:117):

> . . . Span the growth years where the change from being a child to being an adult (physical maturation at least) is most rapid and in many ways the most traumatic. Whether this period should include grades seven, eight, and nine or grades six, seven, and eight is a mute question. The important issues is whether or not the school recognizes the significance of this growth period and its implication for the formation of attitudes, values, and feelings which have much to do with how an individual fulfills a lifetime of needs for himself and others.

The essential ingredient in an effective guidance and counseling program on the junior high level is an understanding of the need for the student to build the foundation of a positive self-concept during the junior high years.

CHAPTER IV

EXISTING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS

Several existing guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools are reviewed in this chapter. Discussion of the programs includes evaluations of their successes meeting individual student needs and a general outline of the main features of the programs. Many experimental and innovative programs have been initiated in junior high schools to meet the criticisms of those in education who feel that junior high schools do not meet the special needs of their students.

In addition to the review of actual junior high school guidance and counseling programs, the last section of Chapter IV will discuss the effectiveness of current junior high school guidance and counseling programs.

The guidance and counseling function of a junior high school must be a cohesive part of the general education goal of the junior high school. According to W. R. F. Grant, Sr. (14:255):

> Basically, guidance functions are services rendered to assist children in making sound adjustments, choices, and plans. The caliber of guidance services afforded the junior high school students and their parents is a deciding factor in determining the degree to which the educational program is effectively focused on meeting the individual's needs.

The guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools that were reviewed for this paper stated their goals to be those of helping their individual students.

Grant (14:255) studied the Booker T. Washington Junior High School in Mobile, Alabama, and stated that the rationale behind the school counseling program included a belief in the individuality of each student, a goal to help each student achieve up to the level of his own capacity, and a goal to help the student meet and solve the problems that he faces and to help him live a well-balanced life.

The guidance and counseling program in the Booker T. Washington Junior High School consisted of five main functions. Included in this list of functions were an orientation service, inventory services, information services, counseling services, and follow-up services. The counseling process involved the homeroom teacher and used the homeroom as the "heart" of the program. The school officials recognized the difficulty of trying to help the individual student adjust to the present and prepare for the future by helping him develop his own interest and abilities. In the words of Grant (14:259):

> Helping pupils to adjust affords challenging experiences in that pupils' ambivalent feelings with respect to security and independence, being treated as children or adults, pleasing teachers or being accepted by peers, result in many perplexing situations.

The school personnel accepted these challenges and concentrated on accepting the reality of these paradoxes with the higher goal not of establishing the best record, but of meeting the needs of the individual student. The counselors in this Mobile, Alabama, junior high school felt a sense of accomplishment and achievement when one student

benefited from their program; the teachers were not looking for large-scale results, but they hoped to help the individual student.

In an attempt to effectively meet the needs of their students, several junior high schools have utilized small group interaction meetings of pupils with teachers and counselors. Opportunities for mutual understanding and outlets for complaints of students provide a rationale for such group meetings. Specific reasons for the group meetings include attempts to meet the challenge of stimulating and understanding underachieving students and disenchanted youth in school. Education experts desire to satisfy the needs of disenchanted youth in junior high school before they reach high school and are able to drop out of school if frustration and alienation continue. The importance of peer interaction is observed in group interactions and cannot be neglected in a consideration of meeting the unique psychological needs of adolescent youth in school situations.

Arthur Jaffe and Alice Reed (18) have written an article in which they proposed that groups of teachers and students organize to promote honest communication in schools. A group counseling project in a New York City penitentiary was cited as an example of positive results that occur because of group interactions. Basic premises of the article were that group counseling sessions should be included in the educational experiences of every student throughout his school life, that the group counseling component should be structured to provide for

regular interaction between the students and their teachers, that this interaction could result in a measurable improvement in learning, growing out of the new perceptions of both teachers and students of each other, and that the student will feel a greater degree of involvement and stake in the school community if given a piece of the decision-making action (18:311).

Important to ultimate effectiveness of group interaction, according to Jaffe and Reed (18) was trust and openness. A counselor's responsibility in these group sessions was to strive to maintain the open atmosphere and help the group study the alternatives to problems that were presented and discussed. According to Jaffe and Reed (18: 312), "The focus is on how each individual member of the group can help the others solve their problems."

Some of the group sessions discussed in the Jaffe and Reed article (18) included teachers, particularly when the teachers were involved in the immediate problem confronting the group. Generally, it was the counselor's responsibility to relay feedback information to the administration and teachers. For this relayed information to be constructive for teachers and the counselor, a trusting relationship was necessary. In the words of Jaffe and Reed (18:312), "Given this atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, constructive dialogue or 'rapping' can take place; without it the teacher could regard such dialogue as spying for the administration."

If group sessions can be conducted in an open, accepting atmosphere, these meetings could become a valuable tool of counselors and teachers in a junior high school. An avenue for complaints and effective communication for students with school personnel would lessen problems with students. Jaffe and Reed (18:315) stated:

> When young people feel their opinions and ideas are recognized as important and valuable, and when they are given the freedom to express these opinions and to help effect changes, they have no need for violent demonstrations to protest their impotence.

A junior high school in Oakland, California, whose students were from an underpriviledged economic, and interracial area, initiated group counseling to help "failing" ninth graders. The counselors and interns active in this program hoped to positively influence the motivation of these failing students.

The leaders of the groups were permissive and nondirective in style and provided no limits for the group sessions, other than prohibitions against destructiveness and excessive noise-making.

Results of this program, reviewed by J. R. Brough (5), demonstrated the eagerness of these students to verbalize. According to Brough (5:14):

> Instead of being anxious about being overheard, many students were looking for means of expressing their hostile feelings and hoped that their remarks would be carried back to their teachers and administrators.

Implications of these results were that students have a definite need to be heard by school personnel and this need can be met by group

interaction. Some of the students expected the counselor to fix their problems and were anxious to have the counselors listen to their complaints. The majority of group discussions centered on student complaints about school, home, and life situations. In the words of Brough (5:16), "Students expressed feelings of deprivation of being misunderstood, mistreated, and over-controlled."

The author (5) recommended that schools include a program that provides a means of formal communication between counselors, teachers, and students. An outlet for students' feelings, attitudes, and complaints is necessary (5:17).

A Canadian study (23) of the effects of group sessions on the school achievement of those junior high school students with behavior problems failed to reveal any significant changes in school performances of the students involved in the group sessions. The background material used by Laxer, Quarter, Isnor, and Kennedy (23) in this study included significant findings about the positive result of group sessions in reduction in the number of student retentions, and in the improvement of self-ideal congruence, but this study itself revealed no influence on school achievement of behavior problem students due to group interactions (23:454).

An extended study of the effects of group counseling with bright underachieving junior high school students was reported in an article written by Frank Trotta, Lynne Rouff, and Neal Daniels (40).

The project was initiated in 1961, and was begin with a proposed purpose of helping these underachieving students with the difficulties that prevented their functioning up to their potential.

With a group of seventh graders, the group counseling proved successful as the grades of the majority of these students improved. With eighth graders faced with a choice of curriculum options according to vocational interests, group counseling enabled the students to investigate vocational alternatives. These sessions gave students opportunities to act out ways of dealing with peers and adults and expressed their perceptions about the occupational world.

This study (40) pointed out the importance of homogeneous group makeups for maximum effectiveness. According to Trotta, Rouff, and Daniels (40:334), "We could not deal with severe behavior problems and markedly disturbed children in the same group as more normal children." The group was disrupted by a large degree of diversity of behavior problems and personality disturbances.

A more efficient student-teacher communication network was sought in this study made by Trotta, Rouff, and Daniels (40). Teachers were asked to complete report forms as precisely as possible and state what they believed the individual students problems to be concerning attitude and behavior. An important consequence of this report (40) was found in this statement:

> Many students noted later that the teachers' periodic statements about them were very effective in enabling them to reflect and gain some perspective on themselves. Frequently they were surprised to find that their teachers had feelings about them, were acquainted with their difficulties, and were willing to help them (40:335).

Conclusions of the Trotta, Rouff, and Daniels study (40) focused on the fact that group counseling does improve the participants' subject grades, behavior, or attitudes; but these changes are not spectacular. One specific recommendation contemplated for this continuing study was to give teachers feedback information from the students. Other recommendations of the researchers (40) included the training of school personnel in group methods to seek early recognition of problem children and the early consideration of these problems in the school's setting (40:337).

Another approach to group guidance was viewed by Lundal Bullock (7) as a step toward a more effective junior high school counseling program. Students from each of the three grades, seven, eight, and nine, were divided into groups with other members of the same class. These groups met with teachers and counselors who were the small-group leaders to discuss topics such as boy-girl relations, living with others, and discovering myself (7:175). The group experiences were excellent opportunities for students to relate with their peers and with adults. The group sessions gave the individual student an opportunity to learn how he thinks, how he feels on certain topics,

and how he relates to others. In this writer's opinion, student group meetings have a potential of meeting the needs of the students to learn about their new identity and develop a self-concept.

Another innovative program in junior high school counseling, reviewed by Hall and Bowden (15), was a core curriculum combined with guidance for seventh graders. Each core teacher functioned as a guidance counselor, in addition to her teaching duties, to help bewildered seventh graders cope with the new junior high environment.

A program of orientation and reassurance for the entering seventh grader, discussed by Hall and Bowden (14) began in the spring of the sixth grade year with visits by selected seventh graders in the guidance core curriculum. In addition, the guidance counselors visited the elementary school and became familiar with the students' files. The day before school opened in the fall, an orientation meeting was held by core teachers with the new seventh graders to explain school procedures and policies. Because of these pre-school activities, seventh graders had a better understanding of life in a junior high school. The Kirkwood, Missouri, superintendent, W. A. Shannon, said in the Hall and Bowden study (15:31):

> . . . Many schools use the core approach, but few coordinate English and social studies with guidance. By doing so, we place greater emphasis on the youngsters' personal needs, without sacrificing the time that should be devoted to learning.

Dennis Rash (34), as assistant principal in a junior high school in Ohio, encouraged junior high school counselors to become acquainted with the entering seventh graders in the summer before school begins. This time-saving measure was helpful in the development of guidance and counseling plans for the year as the counselor became aware of the special needs of his students at the beginning of the school year, and did not take valuable time becoming acquainted with the students during actual school time.

The summer program reviewed by Dennis Rash (34) included visits to the students' homes to learn more about the home situation and allowed parents the opportunity to express their feelings about the school. The home visits also gave the counselors opportunities to explain their roles and show an interest in students. The counselor had the opportunity to meet and talk with his students. According to Rash (34:314), "The purpose of this initial interview was to allow the student to feel important and to foster rapport between the counselor and student." Rash believed that the summer visitation program was significant in the development of counselor-student interaction and rapport--essentials in effective junior high school counseling programs.

Counselors in a Kansas junior high school conducted a summer team-approach counseling program to help disadvantaged students. As Paul R. Welter explained in the article (42) describing this program,

counselors who wanted to do significant work in the summer usually experience monetary problems. The project presented by Welter was financed by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Guidelines for the project reviewed by Welter (42:885) were adopted to spend time with people rather than paper, to work primarily with junior high school students, to make home calls an important part of the work, to place occupational materials in deprived homes, to give priority to working with educationally disadvantaged students who have one or more younger brothers and sisters, and to assign priority to working with those students making transition in their school experience.

The counselors in Welter's study (42) assumed that students from disadvantaged homes had more difficulty adjusting to school situations and that a student could learn easier if he felt comfortable in his new situation rather than feeling dread and uneasiness.

Results and recommendations of Welter's study (42) included a successful evaluation of the summer counseling program. Parents of students visited by the counselors praised the school's interest in their students and approved the project. The school felt that the informal discussion with students helped the school advance their educational objectives.

The inevitability of parental influence and the possibility of either negative or positive effect are important considerations for

effective junior high school counselors. A recent addition to counseling and guidance programs has been the involvement of parents in their students' school program.

A study conducted by L. Wendell Duncan and Paul W. Fitzgerald (11:514) attempted to "measure the effect of increased involvement by the parents in the school life of junior high school students." The intent of the investigation was to prove that improved communication between parents and counselors would improve students' attendance records, increase student communication with parents, lower the drop-out rate, increase the grade point averages of students, and would promote more parental interest in school activities.

The data collected in the Duncan and Fitzgerald study (11) indicated that students whose parents participated in one-hour conferences with school counselors attended school more frequently than students of parents who were not involved in such conferences. The results also revealed that the number of psychological dropouts in school (mentally withdrawn in class) dropped in the students in the experimental group. The parents were able to help the counselors understand their children better, and thus the counselors could be more effective meeting the needs of the students. According to Duncan and Fitzgerald (11:517), "Problems identified by the conferences received early attention and close cooperation between parents and the school prevented many other problems from developing."

Attempts to increase parental interest and participation in school activities can be used as a means to cater to the mind of the community. Gerald E. Curtis (10:169) expressed the importance of approval by the community of school programs in this statement, "No secondary school can grow in value and improve the program-image without community support." Counselors can increase parental support of their counseling programs by acquainting parents with the programs and showing them how the special needs of their youngsters can be met by the programs.

Curtis (10) has termed parental conferences with counselors the basis of an effective junior high school counseling program. He has included the following criteria as additional data on the development of a parent conference system: (a) the school faculty develops the idea creatively; (b) the conference should be a part of the periodic reporting system; (c) the system should be a high priority of the school administrator; (d) conferences should be regularly scheduled; (e) school boards should support the conferences; (f) parent conferences should be the "grassroots" of the counseling program (10:169).

Including parents in the counseling program can financially boost its effectiveness. Parents can assist the school by supporting the bond issues in the community and insure the school that there will be enough money to supply the students with qualified counselors. A

well-equipped staff of counselors can provide their students with help in adjusting to the school situation.

Another influence that counselors have used in their work with adolescents is peer influence, which is discussed by S. T. Vassos (41). According to Vassos (4:209), "Peer influence is one of the best methods of organizing and utilizing the resources of students and their ability to help other students become more successful in the school setting." Older students are important influences on younger students. This influence was the basis of the "helper principle" which stated that people with a problem can help other people who had the same problem in a more severe form (41:209).

A program designed to utilize peer influence, reviewed by Vassos (41), was initiated in New York City in 1965 and was called the Big-Brother-Big-Sister Program. Sixth grade teachers provided junior high school counselors with a list of prospective Little Brothers or Little Sisters, those students who had difficulty with interpersonal relationships, had home problems, or academic difficulties. Upon entrance into the junior high school, the prospective student was asked if he would like to participate in the program. This program was not limited to those students with severe problems and was not limited to seventh graders.

The Big-Brother-Big-Sister program discussed by Vassos (41) was designed to operate during the school day. The participants, both

Big and Little Brothers and Sisters, were allowed to leave classes for meetings; this freedom was given in the belief that the privilege would not be abused. In the words of Vassos (41:213):

> Establishing a sense of belonging and effective two-way communication is viewed as an educational goal that will allow a greater understanding of student needs, thereby helping to create more relevant classroom learning experiences.

The peer-influence program (41) was developed as a way of meeting criticisms that schools have depersonalized, mass-production type education. The relationships established during this program proved meaningful for the Big Brothers and Sisters, as well as the Little Brothers and Sisters.

Innovations in the junior high school guidance and counseling programs include the vocational information area. A lack of pertinent information about career opportunities plagues students who are required to make decisions concerning their futures. According to G. Samson, Jr. (37:60):

> Educators familiar with industry and technology may frequently be surprised at how little students know about occupations in these fields, particularly about skilled trades and technical jobs.

Particularly, those students in underprivileged areas lacked knowledge about employment opportunities.

A vocational enrichment program in New York, reviewed by Samson (37), was designed to fill this information gap with lectures from successful businessmen, including those in careers which do not

require college degrees, assigned papers and discussions to be presented on particular occupations and qualities on a good and a bad job. This service was needed, in the words of Samson (37:61), and "the occupational-information program has served to awaken the guidance department to a serious lack of information for students not interested in a four-year college program." Uninformed students cannot be expected to make an intelligent decision on their vocational future.

An actual introduction to the working world was given to students in a Cleveland, Ohio, junior high school through a Vocational Information Program (VIP). This program, reviewed by Aylor (1), was initiated to meet the needs of high school graduates who do not attend college and are unprepared for a career. In an attempt to begin this vocational counseling program before the students became disillusioned, the program was launched in 1966 with ninth grade boys.

The VIP was expanded into a job-placement service which gave the students actual work experience. Later it included a tutoring program in academic areas. The tutoring program included several community resource people who were interested in helping decrease the number of dropouts and help make the school experiences of youth more meaningful. The VIP had registered many successes; and in the article (1:30) a quote by Paul W. Biggs, Cleveland superintendent of schools, was included, "I am hopeful that what was begun at Kennard (the junior

high school) can soon become a city-wide program for all junior high pupils in the Cleveland Public Schools."

Effectiveness of Junior High Counseling Programs

Effective junior high school guidance and counseling programs need to be structured to meet the special psychological needs of the adolescent student. Junior high school students need opportunities to explore their new world and learn new meaning for this world. According to R. L. Barrett (3:353), "Improved self-understanding is often cited as a desirable outcome of secondary school guidance and counseling programs, and standardized test results are reported to students in an attempt to achieve this goal." Accurate information, a result of test interpretation by counselors, about students can be used by the students to build adequate self-images.

Roger L. Barrett (3) studied the effects of test interpretation on the self-concepts of ninth graders in Minnesota. The results of the study concluded that students increased the accuracy of self-estimates with the knowledge from test interpretation. Barrett stated (3:357), "The evidence gathered in this study implies that a common guidance activity of reporting test results to students can lead to positive results." Interpretation of test results helped students develop more adequate self-estimates; test interpretation was considered as essential by Barrett in guidance activities by school counselors.

With test interpretation, counselors can help raise the students' level of self-estimates and possibly be of help for confused junior high students to raise their level of self-understanding. Yet, as Barrett stated (3:357), "It may be unrealistic for counselors to expect improvement in self-understanding among students with low self-regard." Test interpretation was a starting point for counselors dealing with a student with a low degree of self-regard.

According to Barrett (3:359):

> Counselors who view self-regard as part of a larger personality construct such as general psychological adjustment, may want to bring about positive changes in counselee's psychological adjustment, raising level of self-regard in the process.

Test interpretation can be a useful tool for counselors who desire to help students raise level of self-estimates and self-understanding. The test results can be used as a way to help students more accurately picture their places in the world.

According to Kemp (22:61), "Accuracy of perception is a significant factor in the adolescent's adjustment." Counselors need to consider the importance of accurate perceptions of students in the structuring of school guidance programs. How a student views himself, his progress in school, his ability to relate to other people, and his position in the school situation influences the student's self-concept. To develop a more accurate self-estimate, counselors need to allow students opportunities to explore their new feelings and thoughts.

These opportunities can be included in the counseling relationship, as well as the classroom atmosphere. Kemp stated (22:62) that, "Every possible effort should be made to help the adolescent improve in self-understanding and in his sense of personal worth."

Counselor contact with students essentially determines the degree of effectiveness of junior high school counseling. Counselor contact can be limited by the structure of the counseling program--whether it is a required counseling or voluntary counseling program--and by the socio-economic status of the students.

James R. Brough (6) surveyed 315 ninth graders to determine their preferences toward voluntary or required counseling programs. Brough found the majority of the students to favor the voluntary approach to counseling, yet did find some students who were too shy to initiate the counseling session.

According to Brough (6:329):

> Advocates of voluntarism in counseling suggest that this approach is preferred by secondary school students; that students, not counselors should determine the need for counseling; that some students do not need or desire counseling; and that required counseling might represent an invasion of privacy of students.

On the other hand, Brough said (6:329), those who support programs of required counseling:

> . . . Suggest that student preference merely reflects the counseling program to which the student has been accustomed; that voluntary counselees are those least in need of counseling services; and that the meek and mild-mannered child would not utilize guidance and counseling services.

Counselors must decide upon the kind of counseling program they desire and what kind will best meet the needs of the students. The students must have opportunities to meet with counselors--counselors must structure a program that will reach the most students.

Brough's study (6:332) indicated that students who do use guidance and counseling facilities and students who do not use counseling services in schools do not vary in terms of general ability, school achievement, background, knowledge, and personality ratings. This information indicated that a certain group of students--college-bound, low achievers--does not monopolize the counselor's time. Individual students vary as to preference for either voluntary or required counseling and counselors must make provisions to come into contact with all the students.

Student socio-economic status was studied in terms of frequency of counseling contacts in junior high schools by Doris W. Ryan and Eugene L. Gaier (36) in 1968. The results of the study indicated that counselor contact was determined more by administrative policy than by socio-economic status of the students. According to Ryan (36:471), "Where the counselors initiated the interviews, they apparently do so in keeping with administrative policies of bringing each student to their office at least once a year." A significant finding showed that when parents or students initiated counseling interviews, socio-economic status played a crucial role. Students in the higher socio-economic

levels initiated counseling interviews more often than did students in the lower status.

Counselors attempted to contact all students in this study (36), yet these counselors were aware of the efficiency gap that did exist between the more effective counseling with students in higher status than students in a lower status. According to Ryan (36:471):

> What is thus required is for the counselor to become involved in the identification of developmental strengths and deficiencies of counselees as well as their goals, values, and untapped potential.

Equitable, efficient counseling for students involved consideration of the lower-status students as well as students in the higher status, which did not necessarily mean equitable number of counseling contacts, but equal consideration and treatment.

Attempts to modernize and increase counseling effectiveness in junior high schools is important. As Runyon explained (35:309), "The individual or institution that does not continually seek to improve itself is a sorry one indeed." In Santa Monica, California, the counselors at Lincoln Junior High School have planned to revise their program with the use of data processing.

Essentially, the California junior high school counseling department reviewed by Runyon (35) has developed a student profile card to quickly identify student strengths and weaknesses. The profiles were hand-made at the time of the article, but plans had been made for

the eventual use of data processing to handle this clerical job. The counseling department also was looking for more ways to shorten clerical jobs which are so time-consuming for counselors and incorporate data processing to allow counselors more time to meet with students. One area of use of data processing will be in a follow-up study of the junior high school graduates who are in high school. According to Runyon (35:310), "Within each stage of education, we can only determine the degree of our success by measuring what we have accomplished." In this Santa Monica junior high school a follow-up study was to be made of graduates to determine high school success. Computers and data processing are to be included in the follow-up study.

The effects of individual counseling and group guidance on the vocational maturity of ninth grade boys were studied by B. Jesse and Robert A. Heimann (19). Jesse and Heimann (19:68) attempted to determine the effects of guidance programs on "their vocational maturity, self-information, and knowledge of occupational and job fields."

The findings of this study by Jesse and Heimann (19) were inconclusive, and did not provide sufficient proof that a guidance program for eighth grade students contributed to their vocational maturity. The sample of students used in this study was small, which may have made statistical analysis insignificant. The researchers (19) suggested that additional research was needed to determine effectiveness of eighth grade guidance programs.

In the study by Jesse and Heimann (19), a slight indication that individual counseling affected students more favorably than did group guidance was indicated, and implied that the guidance program did help in the vocational development of junior high school students. According to Jesse and Heimann (19:71):

> Such programs, when carefully designed and carried out, seem then to contribute something more to the development of junior high school students than the casual efforts at vocational maturity given by typical eighth grade teachers in a non-organized guidance program as represented by the control group (those who received no counseling).

The effectiveness of one junior high school counseling program was studied by Kenneth B. Engle, Robert A. Williams, and Gilbert E. Mazer (12:53), who attempted to determine the effects of supplemental counseling, above the usual student contact with guidance and counseling services, on the students' academic achievement, school adjustment, and educational and vocational planning.

Significant statistical findings of the Engle, Williams, and Mazer study (12) indicated that the students in the experimental group, those given the supplemental counseling services of home visits, a pamphlet on vocations, and parental group meetings, showed a superiority in grades. Other findings of the study included a greater frequency of discipline referral in the experimental group, a fact suggesting to Engle, Williams, and Mazer (12:55) that "additional counseling, while facilitating achievement, may also result in freeing

students to assert themselves--perhaps in ways that result in referrals. Inconclusive, unsubstantiated findings based on the reactions of the parents and students to the program revealed a favorable opinion of the programs. Students also felt an increase in knowledge about vocations and a general satisfaction with guidance services.

A method of interaction with behavior problem students was discussed by Jack J. Quarter and Robert M. Laxer (33). Their program of teaching-counseling consisted of sixteen weekly 40-minute group sessions. The beginning of the session was tutorial, but the remainder of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the topic presented. The topics were aspects of frustration and aggression theories that the students hopefully related to their own behavior (33:239).

The experimental method discussed by Quarter and Laxer (33) of relating to behavior problem students did not prove to be successful. According to the researchers (33:230), this failure coincided with other efforts to change behavior through group sessions. Difficulties may have resulted from the inference of the dual role of teacher-counselor inhibiting the students and the special consideration given these students may have strengthened their image as problems.

Understanding the expectations of counselees in junior high school counseling interviews may increase the effectiveness of the counselors. According to W. A. Poppen and H. J. Peters (31:358):

> It is feasible that an awareness of the expectancies of the counselee will help the counselor form a construct of the counselee and thus, be able to meet the counselee at the level of the counselee's expectancies.

Knowledge of counselee expectations helped the counselor evaluate the pupil's orientation toward the guidance function and was helpful in an information function of re-explaining the guidance function. The expectancies of the counselees influenced the role expectancies of the counselor himself (31:358-359).

Findings of this study (31) showed that junior high school pupils expected to discuss specific topics with the counselors and they expected more direction and advice. No clear-cut differences existed between the expectancies of previously counseled students and those of students who had never been counseled.

Counselors who desire to become more effective and understand their clients better have an opportunity of learning more about the adolescent thought patterns through a study of rock music. According to Heussenstamm (17:198), "Contemporary rock 'n roll music is one of the most vigorous and sharply delineating manifestations of the separate subculture of no-longer-tongue-tied youth." Heussenstamm believed (17:200) counselors can gain an appreciation of his disenchanted students and can understand some of their frustrations through their music. "There is a fundamental seriousness, a remarkable diversity, and more social significance in it than popular music ever had." Rock

music resounds themes about conformity, rebellion, society's dissonance, drive to change, and hypocrisy. In the words of Heussenstamm (17:203), "All the issues around which assaults on the traditional practices of public schools are developing can be found in the music." A counselor interested in how it feels to be an adolescent can profit by listening to the pulse of the student--the rock music.

In order for junior high school students to obtain maximum benefit from the guidance and counseling programs, counselors must be continually evaluating and revising their effectiveness. An evaluation of the extent of student contact and how effectively the contact with students helps the counselees must be considered by counselors.

Effective counseling cannot neglect other areas of influence in students' lives. One important influence is parents and a counseling program that includes parents as a basis has been found to be very effective.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The investigation of the needs and characteristics of the junior high school adolescent was done to determine what makes these students unique to counseling. The uniqueness of the students involves the bewilderment associated with physical and social changes that students experience at the onset of puberty. Students concentrate on coping with their new feelings and perceptions, at the expense of school achievement. During the growth period of early adolescence, junior high school students need to establish a new self-concept and establish a new identity different from the identity of their childhood.

Junior high school students faced with a new school situation, as well as physical and social changes, often experience a personal crisis that school personnel can help the students resolve. Junior high school curriculum planners need to consider the needs of their students to explore the new world they see and discover new meanings. Opportunities for student exploration at their own rates are necessary for successful junior high school education programs. The students need the chance to re-examine their interests, abilities, and needs in the school environment. The effects of a mass education need to be reduced and individualized programs need to be established in junior high schools.

An examination of existing junior high school guidance and counseling programs revealed many innovations that educators have initiated in schools. Experimental group guidance sessions, in some cases, including parents, have operated in schools, and other junior high schools have inaugurated vocational programs to fill an information gap for students faced with a significant career choice without adequate information of possibilities.

The effectiveness of existing junior high school guidance and counseling programs investigated in the paper were evaluated on criteria including student expectations of counseling, the results obtained from the innovative programs, such as vocational-information programs, and group guidance sessions, and a review of merits of a totally voluntary counseling program as opposed to scheduled counselor-student interviews.

Conclusions

Based on the review of pertinent literature concerning the existing guidance and counseling programs in junior high schools and the uniqueness of these students to counseling relationships the following conclusions can be stated:

1. Junior high school students face an identity crisis in early adolescence due to physical and social changes.

2. Adolescent students need to develop a new self-concept during junior high school.

3. Junior high school students need to explore their world--new peer and adult relationships, their new feelings, and perceptions.

4. An effective junior high school curriculum includes opportunities for students to explore and sample their world.

5. An understanding of the uniqueness of individual students in junior high schools is essential for successful teaching and counseling.

6. Effective guidance and counseling programs are those that allow students free expression and opportunities to be heard.

7. Gaining the support and approval of parents for new programs can be helpful for successful functioning of the programs.

8. Junior high school students need vocational-occupational information to make intelligent curriculum choices for their futures.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made as a result of the review of literature:

1. More follow-up studies of junior high school counseling students should be made for research knowledge.

2. Studies that are made of innovative junior high school programs should have more strict controls so results are significant.

3. Innovations in junior high school counseling need to be written in professional journals in order for schools everywhere to be aware of successful means of relating to adolescent students.

4. Educators who plan to work with junior high school adolescents should be aware of the unique characteristics of these students.

5. Junior high school personnel and parents need to cooperate in efforts designed to aid the development of their adolescent students.

6. A study of the behavior and needs of junior high school adolescents should be included in the training of junior high school personnel.

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