



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## NEED ASSESSMENT COUNSELING FOR SCHOOL ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

The youth in the 21st century are facing numerous issues that may affect their ability to do well and properly in school. Every student has strong needs and desires to reach some set goals but in this competitive era, their life is being complicated day by day and vastly affected by various mental health problems in schools, and many other educational, vocational, social, emotional, and behavioral problems among them in our country. One of the reasons for these problems is lack of guidance and counseling services in our schools. According to Şahin Kesici, "a student whose personal guidance and counseling need is satisfied can; establish harmonious relationship with friends and parents, knows his/herself, improve problem solving and communication skills. Besides, s/he can improve social skills, cope with test anxiety and make effective decisions" (Kesici, 2007, p. 1327). On the other hand, when the needs are not met, and a student's functioning in school suffers for an extended period, the student may break away from school completely (DeSocio & Hootman, 2004). To overcome negative psychological aspects which affect the student's life, the present research paper is an attempt to identify need assessment counseling for school adolescent students. Need assessment questionnaire (NAQ) constructed and developed by Dogar, Azeem, Majoka, Mehmood, and Latif (2011) which included different areas, i.e. educational, vocational, social, emotional and behavioral needs of students counseling was administered to a sample of 168 (84 male and 84 female) adolescent students of 10<sup>th</sup> class. The results of the present study indicated that the main effect of gender (male and female) branch of study (science and social science) and the interaction effect between branch of study (science and social sciences) and gender (male and female) were found significant on overall counseling needs. Whereas gender and branch (stream) of study differences were not found in the counseling domains (educational, vocational, social, emotional, and behavioral) areas of counseling needs.

## KEYWORDS

Counseling Needs, dimension of counseling, gender, stream, adolescents

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The phase of adolescence is associated with issues of self-identity and self-determination. The general behavior of the adolescents is considered as the stage of anxiety, worry and stress. They have number of psychological problems like worries, the lawlessness and various kinds of strains. This critical developmental period is conventionally understood as the years between the onset of puberty and the establishment of social independence (Steinberg, 2014). In schools, adolescents face a number of problems which may be manifested in the different ways: withdrawal, displeasure, chagrin, anger, and incompetence to meet needs, lack of knowledge, partial or total failure, inability to realize aspirations, anxiety, bullying, and hyperactivity. In general, it is the stage which is considered as the period of depression, anxiety, worry and stress. So, it is widely accepted that the adolescent students need counseling assistance when they face personal, social, educational, vocational, emotional and behavioral issues in the schools. Therefore, school counseling programs are an essential part of the educational process for all adolescent students as they progress through the educational system.

## 2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT COUNSELING

The assessment of counseling needs must always be proactive, indicating gaps between the current situation and the desired situation being

followed by the identification of optimal solutions to improve factual situation (Watkins, West-Meiers, & Visser, 2012). This implies a constant comparison between what is and what should be (Kavale, 2012). Needs assessments may be conceptualized as part of the larger counseling program evaluation process that helps inform counseling practitioners about the outcomes of their services and the impact of their programs on various stakeholder groups (Astramovich, Hoskins, & Coker, 2008). The information gathered through needs assessment may help professional counselors in various specialties to identify critical needs of the population to whom they serve. Counseling needs assessment should help counselors to refine the existing programs that will meet the specific needs of the student population (Astromovich, 2011). According to Kandi (2012) counseling needs are needs of a student that are required to resolve problems which he/she confronts in day to day life situations and also to enrich his personal development. Counselling needs mean those areas of functioning wherein a student needs assistance for optimum achievement and adequate adjustment in the varied life situations. Counselling needs as understood in the present study may operationally be defined as problems in the educational, vocational, social, emotional, and behavioral areas of an individual's functioning and the needs for specified and expert assistance is needed for the resolution of the crises posed by these problems. Generally, needs assessment refers to the evaluative process of gathering and interpreting data about the need for programs and services (Gupta, Sleezer, & Russ-Eft, 2007). Needs assessments often serve as a foundation

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upon which organizations make decisions about where to invest their resources and what populations to target for their services (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995). In addition, needs assessment information can help organizations and individuals prioritize their services and refine existing programs to meet the needs of various subpopulations (Astramovich, Hoskins, & Erford, 2008).

### 3. PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The purpose of any education system is not only to foster academic learning but also the holistic development of students. At the adolescence stage, it is essential to know adolescent's competence, expenses towards higher education, and the places of admission, etc. Adolescents need professional counseling and guidance for the choice of courses according to their ability and skills, and personal counseling for their adjustment problems. In this regard, it is a very urgent need that counseling service should initiate in the schools to solve the various behavioral as well as adjustment problems. Hence, the present study would be helpful and encouraging the school students to identify their counseling needs and problems and solve them through consultation of a good counselor.

#### 3.1 Statement of the problem

In Aligarh majority of schools do not have guidance and counseling facilities. There is no provision in the school system to guide students about the suitable vocations and careers according to their own wishes, interests, ability and skill but counseling and guidance services are not there. The purpose of the present study is to do need assessment of school adolescents.

#### 3.2 Objectives

1. To examine the main effect of gender (male and female), stream (science and social science) and the interactional effect of gender and stream between them of overall scores of counseling needs.
2. To examine the main effect of gender (male and female), stream (science and social science) and the interactional effect of gender and stream between them of educational, vocational, social, emotional, and behavioral counseling needs.

#### 3.3 Hypotheses

1. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on its counseling.
2. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on educational dimension of counseling needs.
3. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on vocational dimension of counseling needs.
4. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on social dimension of counseling needs.

5. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on emotional dimension of counseling needs.
6. There will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on behavioral dimension of counseling needs.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Participants

One hundred sixty eight (168) male and female adolescent students were drawn from secondary schools and Union School (Boys and Girls section) of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. There were 84 male and 84 female adolescent students. Participants were further divided on the basis of Stream (science and social science), where 41 male and 41 female students were from science stream, whereas 43 male and 43 female students from social science stream respectively. All students were studying in class X to XII.

### 4.2 Instrument and Procedure

To assess the counseling needs of adolescent students, Need Assessment Questionnaire (NAQ) was constructed and developed by Dogar, Azeem, Majoka, Mehmood, and Latif (2011). It consisted of 27 statements which represent five different factors for counseling needs of school adolescent students (i.e. 1-educational, 2-vocational, 3-social, 4-emotional and 5-behavioral need of counseling). The number of items representing the factors is as: 1-educational (7 items), for rest of all the needs/factors as, 2-vocational, 3-social, 4-emotional and 5-behavioral (5 items in each). Participants were asked to indicate their response to which they needed assistance with a particular area by using Yes ( $\checkmark$ ) or No (X) responses. 01 score was given to Yes ( $\checkmark$ ) and Zero score was given to No (X) responses. The maximum scores obtained by the subjects were 27 and minimum zero. Cronbach's alpha of 27 items .719 has been reported by the present investigator.

### 4.3 Data Analysis

Obtained data was analyzed by SPSS (20 versions) for the 27 items which describe educational, vocational, social, emotional and behavioral needs. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to explore the counseling need between gender (male and female), stream (science and social science) and the interaction between them on counseling needs.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In accordance with the objectives of the present study an attempt was made to examine the need assessment counseling among school adolescent students.

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation for gender and stream on overall and dimensions of NAQ**

Needs	Male		Female		Science		Social science	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall needs	9.05	3.939	11.79	4.410	10.65 (N=82)	4.344	10.20 (N=86)	4.445
Educational	2.30	1.815	1.98	1.763	2.12 (N=82)	1.842	2.15 (N=86)	1.752
Vocational	1.77	1.524	2.20	1.278	1.99 (N=82)	1.374	1.99 (N=86)	1.467
Social	1.10	1.304	2.08	1.507	1.65 (N=82)	1.486	1.53 (N=86)	1.501
Emotional	2.08	1.538	2.55	1.339	2.50 (N=82)	1.416	2.14 (N=86)	1.481
Behavioral	2.65	1.375	2.12	1.375	2.39 (N=82)	1.421	2.38 (N=86)	1.382

The present table presents the mean and SD for gender and stream on overall and dimensions of NAQ where means and SD scores of the female is (M = 11.79, SD= 4.410) were found higher than the male students (M = 9.05, SD= 3.939) on overall counseling needs. As well as when the present investigator talks about the stream, he found the mean and SD of the science stream was slightly higher (M = 10.65, SD=4.344) as compared to social science (M = 10.20, SD=4.445) but the difference was not significant on overall counseling needs. Regarding the dimensions of NAQ, table-1

indicates the mean and SD of gender and stream scores, where male students (M = 2.30, SD= 1.815) was higher than female students (M = 1.98, SD= 1.763) on educational needs, whereas the social science stream students (M=2.15, SD=1.752) were found slightly higher as compared to science stream (M=2.12, SD=1.842) on said dimension. In the same table-1, the mean score of female students (M = 2.20, SD=1.278) was found higher than the male students (M = 1.77, SD=1.524) on vocational needs and no mean difference was found between both streams. In the case of

social needs dimension, table-1 indicates the mean score of female (M = 2.08, SD=1.507) were much higher than the male students (M = 1.10, SD=1.304), while the mean values of science stream (M=1.65, SD=1.486) was slightly higher as compared to the social science stream (M=1.53, SD=1.501) and no significant difference was found. The total mean values of female adolescent students on emotional dimension in table-1 is (M = 2.55, SD= 1.339) was slightly higher than the male students (M = 2.08, SD= 1.538), and mean values of the science stream (M=2.50, SD=1.416) was again slightly higher as compared to the social science stream (M=2.14, SD=1.481). Lastly, the total mean values of male students (M = 2.65) were slightly higher than the female students (M = 2.12,) on the behavioral dimension. The mean scores of the science and social science stream (M = 2.39) were quite the same on behavioral needs.

**Table 2:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on counseling needs as the dependent variable.

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
Stream	8.450	1	8.450	.526	.469
Gender	328.507	1	328.507	20.468	.000**
Stream * gender	261.340	1	261.340	16.283	.000**
Error	2632.162	164	16.050		
Total	21446.000	168			
Corrected Total	3216.833	167			

\*\*p < 0.01

The table-2 indicates that the main effects of gender (F=20.468, p < .01) and the interaction effects between gender and stream (F=16.283, p < .01) were found highly significant on overall counseling needs. The main effect of the stream was not found significant (F=.526, p > .05).

**Table 3:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on educational dimension of the NAQ

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
stream	.036	1	.036	.011	.916
gender	4.661	1	4.661	1.467	.228
stream * gender	10.328	1	10.328	3.250	.073
Error	521.148	164	3.178		
Total	1303.000	168			
Corrected Total	535.851	167			

The results of the table-3 present that the main effects of gender (F=1.467, p > .05), stream (F=.011, p > .01), and their interaction effects (F=3.250, p > .05) were not found significant on educational dimension of counseling needs. Table-1 shows that the mean scores of male students (M = 2.30, SD= 1.815) was higher than female students (M = 1.98, SD= 1.763) on educational needs. The mean values of the social science stream (M=2.15, SD=1.752) was found slightly higher as compared to science stream (M=2.12, SD=1.842) on educational needs.

**Table 4:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on vocational dimension of the NAQ

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
stream	1.351	1	1.351	.000	.998
gender	8.365	1	8.365	4.502	.035*
stream * gender	23.531	1	23.531	12.664	.000**
Error	304.731	164	1.858		
Total	1000.000	168			
Corrected Total	335.976	167			

\*\*p < 0.01, \*p < .05

Table-4 indicates that the main effects of gender (F=4.502, p < .05), and the interaction effect between gender and stream (F=12.664, p < .01) were found significant on vocational needs whereas the main effect of the stream (F=.000, p > .01) was not found significant.

**Table 5:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on social dimension of NAQ

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
stream	.521	1	.521	.291	.590
gender	42.814	1	42.814	23.895	.000**
stream * gender	35.290	1	35.290	19.696	.000**
Error	293.843	164	1.792		
Total	795.000	168			
Corrected Total	370.661	167			

\*\*p < .01

The findings of table-5 indicates that the main effects of gender (F=23.895, p < .01) and their interaction effects between gender and stream (F=19.696, p < .01) on social dimension were found highly significant, while the significant main effects of the stream (F=.291, p > .05) was not found.

**Table 6:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on emotional dimension of NAQ

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
stream	5.454	1	5.454	2.633	.107
gender	9.048	1	9.048	4.367	.038*
stream * gender	3.039E-5	1	3.039E-5	.000	.997
Error	339.772	164	2.072		
Total	1255.000	168			
Corrected Total	354.280	167			

\*p < .05

The findings of table-6 explains that the main effects of gender (F=4.367, p < .05) on emotional dimension was found significant, but there were no significant main effects of the stream (F=.291, p > .05) and interactional effects between them (F=.000, p > .01).

**Table 7:** Analysis of Variance using overall scores obtained on behavioral dimension of NAQ

Sources	Sum of Square	df	Mean Scores	F	Sig.
stream	.002	1	.002	.001	.975
gender	12.407	1	12.407	6.583	.011*
stream * gender	4.693	1	4.693	2.490	.116
Error	309.103	164	1.885		
Total	1283.000	168			
Corrected Total	325.851	167			

\*p < .05

The above table-7 shows that main effects of gender (F = 6.583, p < .05) on behavioral dimension was significant, while the main effect of the stream (F = .001, p > .05) and their interaction effects were not found significant.

## 5.1 Discussion

The problem of students, especially educational, vocational, social, emotional, and behavioral and the effect of these problems have become serious issues among researchers. To verify the first hypothesis, that "there will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects on overall counseling needs". It is evident from the analysis (table-2) that the main effect of gender and their interaction effects were found significant on overall counseling needs scores. It is cleared from the table-1 that the mean scores of female students were greater than male students. This is because of seriousness regarding their academic pursuits; females are more sincere and punctual by nature and take everything very seriously whereas males generally pursue their goals with ease. Present finding can be supported by earlier studies by American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (AAUWEF), 1998; Cole, 1997, and Pomerantz, Altermatt, & Saxon, 2002. These studies have stated that throughout elementary, middle, and high school, girls earn higher grades than boys in all major subjects, including math and science. Whereas the main effect of the stream was not found significant, it means that the adolescents studying either in science or social science stream have the same needs to counseling. So, the hypothesis-1 is partially accepted.

To verify the fourth hypothesis, "there will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects with respect to the social dimension of NAQ". It is also clear from table-5, that significant main effect of gender and their interaction effects were found on the social dimension of NAQ, whereas the effect of the stream was not found significant. The said hypothesis is also partially accepted. It is also observed from the table-1 that mean scores of female students were much higher than the male students which could be due to the fact of social relationships constitute a problem for most of the female students because they mostly face challenges in developing social interaction and adjustment with others which may manifest themselves through a lack of friends, feeling of inferiority and security, shyness, timidly and isolation. Regarding the stream, it can also be noticed from the table-1 that the mean values of the science stream were slightly higher as compared to the social science stream but the difference was not found. These findings indicated that the adolescent students (male and female) studying either in science or social science stream required counseling. It is suggested that teachers and parents should play a positive role to deal with social problems by encouraging them to engage in teamwork in both academic and non-academic activities.

In response to hypothesis 5 that "there will be no main effect of gender and stream and their interaction effects with respect to the emotional dimension of NAQ". The result of table-6 indicates that the main effects of gender on emotional dimension were found significant, whereas, no significant main effects of the stream and their interaction effects were reported which means that female students are most sensitive and feeling emotionally unstable. These emotional crisis arising due to demands of necessary adjustments in family, peer group and school environment. The female students don't know how to control their feelings and emotions and how to release their tensions. In this situation, the school environment can be more supportive in providing counseling at the strategy level and more precise evaluation of current interventions are required to ensure adolescents' emotions and their personal feelings are addressed effectively within schools. It is concluded that the students from any stream (science or social sciences) are needed assistance from an expert. So, hypothesis 5 is partially accepted.

To ensure the last hypothesis that "there will be no main effects of gender and stream and their interaction effects with respect to the behavioral dimension of NAQ". As can be seen from scores of table-6 that the main effects of gender were found statistically significant, whereas the main effects of the stream and their interaction effects were not found significant on said dimension. The present result in table-1 revealed that the male students are required more counseling needs for behavioral problems than their counterpart, this may due to male students continue to engage in maladaptive behavior like frustrating, confusing, overwhelming, fighting with peers, stealing things, boycotts of class and so on, and these negative behavioral activities influences the school and home environment. So, counseling for behavioral problems is an important step towards assisting students in relief from the problems. It is the duty of the school administration at school to provide a safe and healthy environment where students can feel supported and understood while exploring the challenges and uncertainty in his or her life. Hence, hypothesis 6 again partially accepted.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present study have important implications not only for

adolescents/students but their teachers and families also. Every student has strong needs and desires to reach some set goals but in this competitive era, the student's life is being complicated day by day and vastly affected by various negative aspects including stress, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, violence in schools, and many other behavior problems in our country, the reason behind this may be that the lack of counseling services in our schools and colleges. To overcome aforesaid negative aspects among students, the counseling and guidance programme should be started at the secondary and higher secondary level of education. Thus, it is the prime duty of teachers and school administration to provide bias free environment to adolescent students for their better well being. Besides the schools' responsibilities, parents should trust their children and develop friendly relation so that they can share all their secrets with them. They should spend time interacting with their children in dealing with their legal issues and increase the well-being which will provide scope for independent decisions making related to various career aspects. So, the present research paper points out the significance of a school counselor to handle the adolescent students' problems, who can work for the all-round development of a student. Thus there is an urgent need for the counseling programme at every school and enhance well-being through needs assessment programs.

Finally, the findings of the current study suggest some basic and important points that will be helpful in the future for school counselor, teachers and parents, which are being given below:

- Special support for reconditioning of negative feelings and for channelizing and sublimating emotions need to be planned and organized.
- Time to time special workshops should be organized for adolescents to make them vocationally mature and to expose them to various other areas so that they can choose according to their skills and interest.
- Educational organizations are geared to help adolescents to evaluate their strengths and weakness and light up their paths before they finally decide.
- Female students should be advised to understand themselves and others better during school time because the social attitude towards women's education is generally not positive. Education for females is considered to be an important practice of 'pardah' system and early marriage, illiteracy of parents, lack of educational facilities at home, responsibilities at the girls' home, etc. are other obstacles in women's reach for education.
- Providing necessary guidance to the students, teachers, and parents about educational and vocational choices as they must have information and counseling to allow making sound choices as they go through school and beyond.

These above given such suggestions will have both short- and long-term consequences affecting virtually all aspects of students' lives.

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