The Emerging Role of the Elementary School Counselor

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THE EMERGING ROLE
OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR

by

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LIFE

Charles A. Giglio was born in Buffalo, New York, April 11, 1942. He was graduated from Baker-Victory High School, Lackawanna, New York, June, 1960, and from the State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, New York, in June, 1965, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the role of the elementary school counselor through a review of recent literature. Background information in guidance will provide an introduction and insight into the analysis of the counselor's role at the elementary school level.

Guidance is a continuous process. Beginning at birth when the child's parents implicitly attempt to assume the role of teacher in guiding his every experience. The child learns about his new world through his parents; he finds primary security by belonging to and being wanted by his parents; and eventually the child will assume the standard and desires the parents set as his own.

A child's needs during infancy are easily met, but become more intricate and difficult to satisfy as he grows older. Parents endeavor to satisfy the needs and drives of the child in accordance with socially accepted behavior. Nevertheless, they are not always successful and as a result the child sometimes suffers.


The child's preschool years are a period of considerable psychological development, and he is vulnerable to many different patterns of behavior. He integrates the forces of the home, the school, the church, and peer relationships, during the ages six through twelve, which will build the foundations for future behavior.

Children tend to select as friends those peers who are somewhat identical in age, height, weight, interests, and social maturity. Thus, if a child has not developed patterns of behavior which are acceptable, he becomes stagnant as he is not exposed to new situations and conditions. A failure at this point in time to be cognizant of existing situations, and to provide the individual a workable solution usually implants in the child seeds of maladjustment.

Consequently, it becomes vividly apparent that adequate guidance during the early years of a child's school life may be of paramount importance.

Following is a concise historical examination of organized guidance in American education which will clearly demonstrate the increasing attempt of the elementary school in satisfying and serving a child's needs. Tracing the

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5 Ibid., p. 9.
history and development of guidance, one can go back to such men as Socrates and Aristotle who provided and advocated guidance for youth.

Formal entrance of guidance in American education emerged during the early years of this century. Numerous alterations and progressive advances have characterized formal guidance programs in American schools since inception. In early years, guidance was envisioned as helpful but not essential to a school program; today however, guidance is perceived "as a necessary, crucial, and pervasive feature of the school's educative function." In early years, guidance emphasized occupational choices. Today, development of the whole or total individual is primarily focused upon. In early years, the only guidance vehicle was the individual interview; today, a multitude of individual and group guidance procedures are available to the guidance worker. In early years, guidance responsibilities and duties were in the hands of unprepared teachers or administrators; today, professionally prepared, state-certified counselors and other specialized guidance personnel are in existence.

Formalized guidance work began to develop in America in the nineteenth

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century. In 1908, Frank Parsons founded and directed the Vocational Bureau of the Civic Service House in Boston. This event is commonly recognized as the beginning of the organized guidance movement in American education. The Bureau's primary aim was to aid the young in selecting vocational choices which were based upon occupational aptitudes and interests. Guiding individuals, Parsons believed, was an essential service of education. Consequently, this concept made its appearance as the central theme of his highly influential book, Choosing a Vocation.

Federal funds were made available for guidance purposes with the enactment of the Smith-Hughes Act (1917). The role of guidance in the school system became increasingly acknowledged by foresighted educators during the period of educational surgery, 1918-1927, in which attempts were fashioned toward individualizing education. Continued emphasis on the individual and further movement in the direction of testing was manifestly generated by the need for an efficient method of selecting qualified personnel for the Armed Services during World War I.

During the period of economic uncertainty, 1929-1945, the slower pace of the guidance movement became evident. Reasons for this slowdown were basically twofold: (1) there was a greater need to strengthen the existing guidance

10 Hollis and Hollis, op. cit., p. 16.
11 Lee and Palone, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
programs, rather than establishing new services, and (2) 1929 brought the Great Depression which caused drastic reductions in school budgets and termination of less essential programs in the school system. As a result of the depression, the guidance movement was viewed as a nonessential, thus, many guidance personnel were classified as accessories and lost their jobs. Guidance, however, escaped possible death during this period when it was revived and aided in the 1930's by two outside sources. First, in 1933 the Carnegie Corporation financed the National Occupational Conference (NOC) to collect and disseminate occupational guidance information, to encourage research studies in this area, and to establish a central index of published occupational data. Secondly, the government, this time, through the George-Deam Vocational Educational Act (1936) provided Federal funds for guidance purposes. This stress toward occupational information was further promoted by the government in 1938, with establishment of the Occupational Information and Guidance Service as a division of the U.S. Office of Education. ¹⁵

Great impetus was thrust upon the guidance movement with the outbreak of World War II, which brought forth a vital need for efficient procedures in the recruitment and selection of qualified personnel for the Armed Forces. At War's end, in 1945, Veterans Administration guidance centers began functioning

¹⁵Hollis and Hollis, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
in some colleges and universities for the purposes of providing continual

guidance services.

Federal support once again made its presence in this area with the enactment of the George-Barden Act of 1946, which allocated Federal funds to public vocational secondary schools in states which provided vocational guidance services. In 1958, a significant contribution to the field of guidance emerged with the passage of the National Defense Education Act, truly a landmark in the growth of school guidance, Financial support was provided by the government to support guidance services in public secondary schools. Social legislation in 1964 and 1965, particularly the birth of Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, extended federal support to guidance programs in elementary schools. This extension in 1964 magnified the importance of guidance in the early years of a child.

In retrospect, two significant trends in guidance have emerged since World War II - (1) an increased interest in research in this field, and (2) an increased interest in developing a role for the guidance worker at both the secondary and more recently the elementary school levels.16

Prior to discussing the latter trend of role development it seems


Hollis and Hollis, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
appropriate at this time for future reference to crystalize to some degree the term guidance. Definitions or interpretations of the term guidance have been numerous, varied and at times avoided for reasons of being too controversial. A canvas of the plethora of literature written on the topic indicates that each author has viewed the word in the manner that has suited his own point of view, attitudes or convictions.

In the early years of the twentieth century, this word was used simultaneously with the term vocational. When one spoke of guidance, he implicitly meant vocational guidance. 17

During the past decade guidance has been vaguely characterized as "the personalized part of education." 18 More specifically, it was symbolized as the concept of "assisting individuals to make plans and decisions and in implementing their development in accordance with their own emerging life patterns." 19

Among the most sensitive critics who has deemed the term guidance as meaningless has been C. Gilbert Wrenn. When referring to the word guidance indirectly, he suggested that "the term guidance workers, already in disfavor, will disappear from our vocabulary as a vague and ambiguous term involving a person whose time may be spread so thinly over such a variety of activities that no one of them can be performed adequately." 20

On the other hand,

18 Hollis and Hollis, op. cit., p. 4.
Hoyt has argued for the retention of the concept because it "is essential if the role of the counselor in education and in pupil personnel work is to be placed in proper perspective." Hoyt sees it as a symbol of which all educators must share. 21

A joint committee of ACES (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision) and ASCA (American School Counselor Association), probing the role of an elementary school counselor, found it necessary in 1966 to include the word guidance in the total educational picture and described this term as a "continuing process for the developmental needs of all the pupils." 22

Other authors have perceived guidance as both a concept and a process. Conceptually guidance is primarily focused upon "optimal development of the individual for his and society's benefit." 23 Viewed as a process, guidance is the "gathering of substantive knowledge of the developing characteristics and patterns of the individual and helping him to use this knowledge of his own growth." 24

An authoritative figure, Dr. Arbuckle, although providing us with a definition, stated that dissatisfaction of the term has been on the increase.


24Ibid., p. 7.
The reason being that "guidance is almost the exact antithesis of both the practice and belief of the professional guidance counselor." 25

The interpretations of guidance presented in this thesis demonstrates the meaningless plight in attempting to construct an absolute definition. Overlapping does occur and guidance can generally be viewed, as a process of helping an individual understand himself (eg. to accept and adjust to his interests, abilities, potentials and limitations) and his world (eg. to adjust to his school, his home, and his community).

While researching the literature, many questions arose in the mind of the writer. Is there no need for guidance services in the elementary school? Are the problems of children purely vocational? Do these problems suddenly begin to appear in secondary school?

Counselor educators have recently expressed the need for guidance services in the elementary school, as have educational leaders such as Conant, professional organizations, various educational state departments, and the United States Office of Education.

Guidance has been perceived by many educators as a means of actively facilitating the students growth and development-first in helping him become a more meaningful individual and then in providing an opportunity for

25 Arbuckle, op. cit., p. 87.
him to be this individual. Royster's viewpoint provides a generalized stepping stone for the why of elementary school guidance when he stated:

For its part, the school has a major responsibility to help each individual become an effective member of the society. Meeting this responsibility becomes more difficult in light of our present knowledge about the uniqueness of the individual. Each child has his own rate, timing, and capacity for learning. Each has his own purpose and goals, his own limitations, and particular background of experiences.


For these reasons ... a second, organized program of guidance is essential in the elementary school.\textsuperscript{27}

Hill argued that helping each child actualize himself through the development of his dignity, integrity and worthiness is an ideal which educators need to follow. The author further contended that the development of guidance services at the elementary school level, and the counselor's role, was a direct influence upon the development of the following five factors:\textsuperscript{28} (1) universal acceptance of educational knowledge concerning the importance of child development in early years, (2) a trend toward accepting the education of the whole child has increased the needs of teachers in the area of consultation with special service personnel, (3) teachers and administrators have become increasingly cognizant that the intricate life-planning and choice-making decisions, which a child must face later in life, are highly dependent upon the attitudes and choices he experiences early in his life, (4) developmental guidance efforts initiated early in a child's life may aid in reducing the high school dropout problem and the problems of underachievement and waste of the talents of underprivileged children from minority groups, and (5) the school has taken on an increased responsibility of moving further into the child's extra-school life, since the determination of the child's self-concept


his sense of worth, values and achievements is greatly influenced, not only by
the school, but by his home life, parental attitudes, and the community. 29

Other recent studies, within the past ten years, have centered around the
need for guidance services in the elementary school through documentation of
educational, emotional, social, and physical adjustment problems. The reason
is that a large percentage of children at this level have encountered these
problems. Factors related to these adjustment problems have been categorized
into the following:

1. Class size
   An increase in the student population has not been proportional to
   the number of qualified teachers in both the elementary and
   secondary schools. 30 "Classes in elementary schools are now over-
   sized, with many temporary, inadequately prepared teachers. With
   this classroom situation, a withdrawn child may be overlooked or an
   aggressive child may cause excessive interruption of class work. 31

2. Population mobility
   Each year approximately one-fifth of the population moves from one
   home to another, and in 1958, government findings indicate that some
   12 million children had been displaced and adjustment toward a new

29 David W. Brison, "The Role of the Elementary Guidance Counselor,"
National Elementary Principal, XLIII (April, 1964), pp. 41-42.

30 Annual Report, United States Department of Health, Education, and
228.

31 Smith and Eckerson, op. cit., pp. 34-42.
environment and friends became a prime factor.  

3. **Broken homes**
The 1960 government figures indicate that thirteen per cent of the children under 18 years of age come from broken homes and another 202,000 have been born out of wedlock. This may result in children having social or emotional problems.

4. **Working mothers**
Thirty per cent of mothers under 18 years of age are working and over 20 per cent of these mothers have children under the age of six. Thus, many of these children suffer from lack of supervision, companionship and a weakened family structure.

5. **Delinquency**
The average age at onset of maladapted behavior, in a sample of 500 persistent delinquents from the underprivileged areas of Boston, was somewhat over eight years, with almost half the group showing clear signs of anti-sociality at seven years or younger, and nine-tenths at ten or younger. Thus, potential delinquents stem from elementary school at a crucial age, when preventive measures can be a very beneficial factor.

6. **Dropouts**
During the decade of the 1960's, approximately 7.5 million

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33. Ibid., pp. 9-12.

34. Ibid., pp. 35-36.

students will leave school before high school graduation, about 2.5 million will not venture beyond the eighth grade, and two out of three will not go further than tenth grade. Problems which finally result in a dropout begin, and are quite overt, way back in the elementary grades. In fact, it is early in grade school that many of the potential dropouts begin to fall behind in their scholastic achievements and this results in ... retardation .... These results suggest that perhaps some of our occupational education and guidance might begin much sooner than it does now.  

These factors lend much support toward the realization that the elementary school guidance services are necessary and essential. However, progress toward this goal has moved much more slowly than have similar services in the secondary school. This slow pace has been attributed to three factors - (1) secondary school guidance originated with emphasis on vocation, while the elementary school de-emphasized this factor, (2) there was and still is difficulty discriminating between guidance and teaching in the elementary school setting, and (3) there had been rapid development of other specialized services for students in the elementary school prior to guidance.  

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Summary

In summary, the child encounters many problems which begin early in his life and if not coped with and resolved at this time, become reinforced and compounded as he grows older. The older he is, the more difficult it is to deal with the problems.

Organized guidance in 1908 was an attempt to help the high school student. This was limited to helping the child to choose a vocation. Various changes had taken place in the field of guidance and counseling during the depression and World War II. Several acts were passed which influenced the field positively. Finally, a joint committee of ACES and ASCA described guidance in terms of satisfying developmental needs of pupils. Other authors described guidance as helping a child realize his full potential. This was the basis upon which elementary school guidance was first conceived.

However, it has not been until the last ten years that the importance of guidance in the elementary school became apparent. Reasons for this were increasing class size, population mobility, broken homes, working mothers, delinquency and dropouts.

Progress toward the development and implementation of guidance and counseling in the elementary school has been slow but persistent.
CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROLE OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

What is the role of the counselor in an elementary school setting? Are his responsibilities, services or duties a carbon copy of his counterpart on the secondary school level?

A considerable number of authors have presented viewpoints on the role of an elementary school counselor. Since much of the work in this field has been largely theoretical, and unsubstantiated by research, the role or behavior pattern of an elementary school counselor is still being identified and clarified.39

In 1967, Mayer maintained that there was little agreement among authorities as to the precise role or purpose of an elementary school counselor and that much of the research data was fragmented, scattered and contradictory.40 Yet there continues to be an incremental request for qualified counselors at the elementary school level. These counselors are


asked to help deal with general development problems of children. A review of current research literature by the writer of this thesis has uncovered a variety of issues, authoritative opinions, and actual practices.

Analytical discussion of the counselor's role has been approached in several ways. The main approaches were: (1) categorizing the perceptions of elementary school teachers, principals, and counselors, (2) defining a counselor's specific functions, (3) debating whether the counselor should be a generalist, which is sometimes referred to as a resource person, or a specialist, and (4) exploring the nature of the guidance function at the elementary school level.  

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1Ibid., p. 212.


Thomas W. Mahan, "The Elementary School Counselor: Distributor of
At times, description of the counselor's task has taken the form of generalized rather than specific characterization or explanation.42

Intensive investigation has revealed that many authorities and studies of recent origin are in accordance with the premise that the elementary school counselor has three major functions to perform in his role as a guidance specialist, they are: (1) coordinating, (2) counseling, and

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Stripling and Lane, op. cit., pp. 11-14.


Mahan, op. cit., p. 73.

However, there continues to be substantial disagreement in determining which of these functions should be considered as the primary responsibility of the counselor's role.

Principals in elementary school, in a study conducted by Shertzer and Lundy, viewed the counselor's role as being coordinator, consultant, and counselor, in that order of importance. \(^4\) A later study completed by Carl Foster revealed findings that five groups of educators—elementary school principals, counselors and teachers as well as secondary school counselors and counselor educators—all viewed "counseling" as the prime function performed by the counselor in an elementary school setting. \(^5\) By contrast, Perrone and

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\(^4\) Shertzer and Lundy, op. cit., 211-214.

Evans, found that counselors in elementary schools spent considerably more time in "various consulting activities" than they did counseling individuals. They stated that more counselor attention to counseling responsibilities in elementary schools is needed. This can be illustrated best by the following studies. The California State Department of Education, which conducted an extensive study, discovered that elementary school counselors and principals in California agreed that the most important duties of counselors at the elementary level were counseling, teacher consultation, and parent consultation, in that order of significance. The Joint ACES-ASCA Committee on the Elementary School Counselor strongly emphasized the counseling function as major responsibility of the counselor. The Illinois State Department of Guidance Services suggested that the elementary school counselor should provide individual counseling to "(a) help pupils and parents
develop better understanding about the pupil's personal characteristics, (b) help pupils and parents develop better understanding about the pupil's potentialities, and (c) help pupils make a smooth adjustment to the particular school situation." Smallenburg found that when teachers were asked to rank ten selected duties of the elementary counselor in their order of importance, counseling pupils with learning, physical, social and emotional problems was selected as the most important. McDougall and Reitan conducted a survey in the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington to sample the perceptions of elementary school principals regarding the elementary school counselor. Of the questionnaires returned (Idaho 25 or 67.7 per cent, Oregon 59 or 67.0 per cent and Washington 85 or 72.0 per cent) there was no major difference in the patterns of responses. Thus the data was reported and analyzed as a single sample. Table 7 included those functions of counselors considered most important by the majority of responding principals. The first, third and fourth functions rated as being most important by the principals were all concerned with the counseling of students. They were, in the order of importance, the counseling of students with personal and social problems, the counseling of students with academic problems, and the counseling of students with severe discipline problems. Koeppel represents a segment of educators who describe


50 Smallenburg, op. cit., pp. 15-18.

51 McDougall and Reitan, op. cit., pp. 351-52.
the elementary school counselors role as primarily one who provides a service of counseling to all children. The basis for this rationale is centered around the author's premise that guidance program at the elementary level should be developmental rather than crisis oriented or focused upon a particular problem.

Utilization of the elementary school counselor as chiefly a consultant has been advocated by Smith and Eckerson. Smith and Eckerson conducted a comprehensive review of 24 elementary school guidance programs chosen as outstanding by state directors of guidance services. Based upon the duties performed by the guidance specialists in these 24 programs, Smith and Eckerson felt that it was very proper to refer to them as "guidance consultants." They pointed out that the counselor's primary role on the secondary level is counseling—"... to help each student understand himself and make decisions relating to his education, vocation and personal problems." A different role, however, is performed by the guidance consultant because (1) selection of subjects or courses in elementary school is a rare thing; (2) vocation planning is minimized at this level even though informative orientation of occupations may be a part of guidance; and (3) the number of children in elementary school who have the maturity for self-analysis and understanding


necessary in counseling personnel problems is very limited.\(^{54}\)

Further emphasis of identifying the elementary counselor as a consultant, primarily a parent consultant, has been promoted by Heisey. The reasons for his conclusions are that (a) potentially the greatest agent of change in the child's environment is the parent, (b) interest in the child has been more consistent and intense over a longer stretch of time by the child's parent, (c) the home should provide the primary value training, (d) the greatest storehouse of data concerning the child can be contributed by the parents, and (e) the counselor's own skill will be enhanced when he shares with parents knowledge in those areas with which they are most concerned.\(^{55}\)

Literature pertaining to the counselor as a coordinator has not been expounded upon by authors in the field of guidance. Instead, there has been a trend by some authorities, such as Hill, Mahan, Stripling and Lane to portray the elementary school counselor as mainly a resource person.\(^{56}\) Stripling and Lane believed that a movement had been underway recently to recognize or promote the role of the elementary counselor as a specialist consultant, a

\(^{54}\)Ibid., pp. 1-10.


Mahan, op. cit., pp. 72-74.

Stripling and Lane, op. cit., pp. 11-15.
"professional resource person," who is primarily interested in enhancing the
guidance portion of the teacher's role.57

Is a counselor able to utilize counseling techniques in his relationships
with children in the elementary school?

Presenting counseling as the heart and core of the counselor's role in
the elementary school, and limiting consultation with parents and teachers to
auxiliary functions, opens up the door to controversy and criticism. In
general, experts have explicitly and implicitly raised doubt about the
child's lack of maturity in verbal development and reasoning.58 Consequently,
any significant benefit which may come from this relationship may be question-
able.

On the other hand, the importance of utilizing the counseling experience
has been supported by many educators.59 Anna Meeks in referring to an
elementary school counseling program in which the counseling of individuals
and small groups of students was an actuality states that "It is our firm

57 Ibid., p. 74.

58 Louise O. Eckerson and Hyrum M. Smith, "Elementary School Guidance;
The Consultant," Guidance and Counseling in the Elementary School, ed. by Don

Herman J. Peters, Bruce Shertzer and William VanHoose, Guidance in

59 Robert N. Hart, "Are Elementary Counselors Doing the Job?" School
Counselor, IX (December, 1961), pp. 70-72.

Bruce Shertzer and Rolla F. Pruett, "Guidance in Elementary Schools,"
Guidance and Counseling in the Elementary School, ed. by Don. C. Dinkmeyer
conviction that children with poor self-concepts do not learn. Counseling has as its chief goal helping pupils gain a more realistic self-concept."60 Boy and Pine pointed out in describing the counseling function at the Lexington Public School in Massachusetts that counseling specialists "engage in counseling with individual students and groups of students when it is deemed that such counseling will be educationally helpful."61 Hill reasons that counseling children is a service which has not been adequately understood or researched, and believes that the traditional method—one-to-one and small group counseling—employed by elementary school counselors may not be the best manner in which we should counsel children at this level.62 Curren disputes this point when he states that

"Generally speaking, there seems to be comparatively little difference between the interview process with children and that of adolescents or adults. Often a small child talks freely and the interview follows the paths described. The same skills and responses are necessary for counseling children as for adolescents or adults and if properly used favorable results can follow."63

Brammer and Shostrom compromise the latter two viewpoints by proposing that both the child and the adult are faced with similar counseling goals, but because of the immaturity and dependence of the child, modifications of


62Hill, op. cit., p. 140.

counseling techniques are necessary. 64

Research literature on the counseling of children in the elementary school has been given minimal treatment, and consequently the controversy over child counseling remains and issue. The following section will provide more depth on counseling at the elementary school level. 65

Several authors confer in the assumption that the role of an elementary school counselor is unique to the degree that he serves the developmental needs of all the children, rather than the correction or remediation of problems. 66 This statement is qualified to the extent that a major portion of a counselor's work involves primarily a majority of children who are not classified as having "pathological emotional or behavior disorders" and who are not considered to be mentally retarded. 67


67 Prison, op. cit., p. 42.
In attempting to understand children educators have endeavored unsuccessfully to apply concepts, experiences and data elicited from adult clients. However, it has been realized that "the emotional and behavioral disorders of children differ in many significant ways from the adult disorders, and the younger the child the more marked are the differences."68

Younger children experience a great deal more psychological dependency upon "significant others" that do older children. The child finds himself in much more of a state of flux than does an adult, and appears to be much more vulnerable to inner and outer stresses. Thus, Mayer concludes, a child's environment is "objectively and phenomenologically" more significant and influential upon his behavior than are adults.69 Studies have supported this concept of environmental influence.70

Environmental influences, then, can be a very useful tool in attempting to alter maladjusted behavior into positive change or psychological growth, and consequently, counseling a child can become an effective and significant

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69 Ibid., pp. 210-211.  
70 Ibid., p. 212.


The American Personnel and Guidance Association's Committee on Dimensions of Elementary School Guidance, made the following comment about counseling in the elementary school:

What are we trying to do with a child in counseling? (1) Merely allowing the child to establish a relationship with someone to help him see himself as a more adequate person, to find out things about himself, and then with this knowledge to work toward goals. (2) Looking and listening to hear what the child is saying to us. Often the child is trying to communicate his need for help and this process provides an opportunity to become more sensitive to the child's needs. This we call counseling. Such counseling is not necessarily a communication of words. The content of the counseling will reflect the developmental level of the child.71

Dinkmeyer succinctly presents the trend of counseling children by maintaining that this type of counseling falls into two determinable categories: (1) "developmental counseling," and (2) "counseling for the modification of behavior and attitude." Developmental counseling, usually short-term, focuses on harmonious contact with the child so that the developmental problem can be jointly investigated and analyzed in order for the child to achieve self-understanding. As a result of this self-help, the child can gain an insight into his personal worth and thus, attain a feeling of adequacy and competency when he comes into direct contact with the school's expectations. The latter viewpoint, usually problem-oriented, emphasizes the alteration of a child's mistaken and confused attitudes, perceptions, convictions and behavior. In this approach, the counselor is more active and may utilize either indirect

behavioral modification techniques or direct confrontation with the individual. This type of counseling, although more manipulative, may help a child to understand the purpose of the symptoms and the reasons why he does not adequately cope with his problems.72

Peters favoring the developmental rather than the therapeutic or remedial approach, believes that the counseling of children should focus on the individual and his totality by assisting the pupil: "(1) to achieve self-understanding, (2) to learn to deal with complicated interpersonal relationships, (3) to attain appropriate academic achievement, and (4) to alleviate special personal or emotional problems." In other words, the major concern of the counseling service is to aid the student in assessing his potentiality.73

Dinkmeyer's approach to developmental counseling include basically a short-term collaborative relationship in which the child learns to investigate, analyze, and deliberate in order to become more self-directed in dealing with certain developmental problems which are of concern to him.74 The counselor in his relationship must be aware of the child's basic needs. An elementary school child is in an unfolding process—physically, emotionally, and socially from early to middle childhood to preadolescence. Their total personality is

72 Dinkmeyer, op. cit., p. 223.
74 Dinkmeyer, op. cit., pp. 263-64.
in the stage of becoming. Cognizance of normal child development and individual rates of development, Dinkmeyer comments, is as essential as awareness to adjustment difficulties. Understanding a child's purpose for behavior is as important as knowing his developmental needs.75

Representative of the modification of behavior and attitude viewpoint are the Combs, Krumboltz and Hosford, and the Adlerian approaches which advocate the application of learning principals to the counseling process as the most effective approach to counseling children, but they differ in the operation of the theory.76

Combs strongly emphasizes a theory of perception, which assumes that "all behavior is a function of the individual's field of perception at the instant of behavior." The goal of counseling, he believes, is to help to change or adjust a troubled child's perception.77

Krumboltz and Hosford believe that the success of a counselor should be measured by the degree to which pupils can be helped by the counselor in their involvement to attain more appropriate types of behavior. This behavioral

75 Ibid., pp. 261-62.


77 Krumboltz and Hosford, op. cit., p. 45.
approach advocates two techniques of learning, positive reinforcement and
extinction and stresses the goals of: "(1) altering maladaptive behavior, (2)
learning the decision making, and (3) preventing problems."\textsuperscript{78}

The Adlerian approach to child counseling, presented by Dinkmeyer, places
great emphasis on the holistic nature of an individual's behavior, the total
pattern of psychological movement in the social environment. A counselor,
according to this theory, should focus his attention upon a child's actions,
his goals or purpose, rather than the cause of the symptom. Counseling will
entail: (1) the development of a cooperative relationship leading toward a
common purpose, (2) the investigation and understanding, by the counselor, of
the child's life style, (3) the interpreting to the counselee the purpose for
his behavior, the mirror effect, and (4) the reorientation, by the counselee,
of his mistaken concepts and beliefs in favor of more accurate evaluations.\textsuperscript{79}

Counseling children at the elementary school level makes it necessary to
examine the distinctive principles and processes unique to this situation in
order to be fully cognizant of the elementary school counselor's role in his
relationship with the child counselee. Six relevant factors are:

1. Often, a child of elementary school age will not refer himself for

\textsuperscript{78}John D. Krumboltz and Raymond E. Hosford, "Behavioral Counseling in the
Elementary School," \textit{Elementary School Guidance and Counseling}, I (December,

\textsuperscript{79}Don Dinkmeyer, "Conceptual Foundations of Counseling: Adlerian Theory
and Practice," in \textit{Guidance and Counseling in the Elementary School}, by Don
Dinkmeyer, pp. 244-49.
counseling, since he may not be aware of this service or may not perceive his behavior as a problem. Thus a child is frequently referred by a teacher. 80

2. Counseling, being a new and unique experience for a child, must be clarified by the counselor in terms of each participant's role in this relationship. 81

3. A counselor may also be required to increase his verbal interaction with a child counselee, and consequently, it may be necessary for a counselor to become more sensitively cognizant to a child counselee's non-verbal, behavioral clues, such as body movements, facial expressions, and gestures. 82

4. A child's limited affective behavior and his inability to relate personal feelings may require a counselor to describe, using his own vocabulary, his perception of the child's feelings, rather than simple reflection or repetition of these feelings. 83

5. Utilization of play materials in order to relax a child and increase his attention span seems to be a key toward increasing successful communication

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80 Brammer and Shostrom, op. cit., p. 375.
82 Ibid., pp. 264-65.
83 Brammer and Shostrom, op. cit., p. 374.
in a counseling experience, however, evidence from other findings tend to weaken this position.84

6. Encouragement of the child’s assets by the counselor, some authors believe, is a major therapeutic technique which should be a necessity in a relationship with pupils at this age level. It provides the child with evidence of the counselor's interest and understanding. This may also indirectly make a child recognize and accept both his assets and his faults.85

The use of group counseling, during the past decade, has increased considerably in the elementary school.86 This method, however, is not a new technique. Socrates used a form of group counseling with the youth of his day. Alfred Adler, a Viennese psychiatrist, seems to have been one of the first to intentionally and systematically use group methods in his child guidance clinics.87


Group counseling receives its special significance with the realization that many children's problems are primarily social. Each child may encounter some sort of difficulty in his attempt to find his place in society. Consequently, group counseling becomes a natural tool in dealing with interpersonal relationships. It enables the child to benefit from positive influences and encouragement of the group as he uses the opportunity to reveal personal convictions and feelings. Group members are provided with a climate of genuine belonging and with a realization that their problems are similarly shared by others. The result is that group counseling provides the child with peer feedback concerning his behavior and with the opportunity to develop new behavior approaches to his social problems within the group. Experiences such as these might never have been achieved in individual counseling.

Organization of group counseling in elementary schools must take into account differences in age and mental as well physical development of the child. Dinkmeyer believes that although the same techniques of counseling may apply to all ages, the counselor must be flexible enough to adapt to his clients' social and emotional maturity. The counselor must also take into account his client's previous experience or lack of experience in groups, and the development of his client's communicative skills.

The type of counseling skills effective in secondary schools may be

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88 Brammer and Shostrom, op. cit., pp. 331-345.

applied to seventh and eighth graders. Other techniques may be necessary for the intermediate and primary grades. Counseling groups of fourth, fifth and sixth graders does require certain changes in techniques, such as: (1) Younger children require more structure and more carefully defined limits. They must be fully aware of what is expected in group counseling. (2) Ohlsen and Gazda (1965) concluded, in relation to the concept of structure, that there appears to be a need for more active participation on the part of the counselor than was required in older age groups. (3) Although children seem to empathize with peers, they have difficulty maintaining a sustained interest in another's problem. As a result, Ohlsen and Gazda further concluded that young children should be treated in smaller groups of five or six, and for shorter periods of time with a maximum of forty to forty-five minutes. The authors also recommended three meetings a week. (4) Ginott reported the separation of boys and girls for counseling during the latency period as a prevailing practice. Ohlsen and Gazda noted that more maturity was exhibited by girls, but reluctantly recommended the separate treatment for boys and girls at this age. (5) Role-playing, a form of group counseling, is effective when a client, at this age, has difficulty describing

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89Dinkmeyer, op. cit., p. 315.


91Ibid., p. 108.


a situation or conveying to others how he feels about it. 94

Utilization of group counseling techniques as stated above not only provides the counselor with needed guidelines in group work at this level but also gives to the counselor time to fulfill his many other duties. Time which would not be available with individual counseling.

A growing number of educators in the field of guidance and counseling believe that consulting is one of the primary roles of a counselor, while others go a step further by proposing that consultation may be the only feasible approach which can fulfill the developmental guidance trend at the elementary school level. 95

Dinkmeyer adequately represented the first viewpoint when he maintained that counseling and consultation supplement each other. He stated that


"counseling serves to help the counselor understand the child, and enables him to consult more effectively," while "the consultant relationship provides the counselor with a better understanding of the environment."  

Eckerson and Smith believe that this changing world has produced a modern day elementary school child who is faced with an increase in problems of youth and adult pressures, which relate to underachievement, delinquency, and dropouts as well as college admission. His problems are caused by conditions which obstruct his learning process in school, and these may be ascribed to stresses "in the home, physical defects or poor health, poor social relations, emotional blocks, and intellectual limitations, as well as unsatisfactory methods of instruction and pupil-teacher relations."  

These pressures in children could manifest themselves in the form of aggressiveness, obesity, withdrawn and unloved tendencies, undernourishment, defects in speech and hearing, and a host of other limitations. Thus, the needs of elementary school children call for distinct guidance approach, one different from that used with adolescents. The identification and prevention, or the developmental guidance approach of assisting all children directly, and indirectly, in the author's estimation can best be performed by a counselor functioning as a guidance consultant. The teacher will continue working the closest with each child, but his teaching will be greatly enhanced by services of a guidance consultant.  

96 Dinkmeyer, op. cit. p. 106.  
97 Eckerson and Smith, op. cit., p. 113.  
98 Ibid., pp. 112-114.
Lee, using a more specific and direct approach, perceives the guidance counselor as a consultant who should assist teachers in working with children and parents. He views the consultant as one who is primarily concerned with enhancing the effectiveness of the teacher, and he proposed the following functions of the guidance counselor as a consultant who: (1) collects, interprets, and utilizes informative data to help teachers better facilitate the planning of individualize programs for children, (2) helps teachers relate to parents, (3) works with principals in identifying the unique problems and needs of the school, and (4) works with individual pupils or groups of pupils on occasion.99

Dinkmeyer similarly perceives the guidance counselor as a consultant who is concerned chiefly with maximizing the development of each child by increasing teacher competency in dealing with guidance problems. The consultant, the author maintains, should be involved in establishing a continuous flow of relevant information between each classroom and his services.

Dinkmeyer further believes that a primary task of the consultant is the observation of all classroom in order to look for learning and behavioral problems. The child is seen in the classroom setting in order to realistically view his relationships to the teacher, the group, the learning atmosphere, the specific learning task, and to obtain a first-hand diagnosis. This classroom observation is followed up by regularly scheduled appointments with individual pupils.

teachers to discuss their problems and by providing general in-service contacts collectively with all the teachers.

The teacher plays a key role in this relationship by assisting the consultant in detection and successful management of the child's learning and behavioral difficulties.100

Kaczkowski believes that a counselor must function within an educational setting and that his role is greatly affected by the institution's goals, which include as its chief function the instruction of children so that they may acquire a common set of learning tasks. Guidance counselors, then, should primarily concern themselves with assisting the school staff in appraising the affective aspects of the instructional process. The role of consultant should have three aspects to it: (1) teachers request consultation when their professional skills are inadequate in (a) assisting the pupil to function successfully within the classroom setting, or (b) when the class itself does not function successfully; (2) the principal requests assistance in matters relating to school, school programs, or staff members; (3) the counselor may initiate consultation with the child's parents or school staff when he feels that certain alterations in the child's environment or in the individuals consulted will enhance the counseling process.

The author, Dr. Kaczkowski, maintains that consulting with teachers and parents proceed in a somewhat different fashion. A counselor serving as a mediator for the student concerned may consult with the teacher in order to

obtain certain modifications in classroom procedure so that favorable behavior changes in the child may be facilitated. However, when the counselor serves as a mediator between a child and his parents, he may assume a teaching role in order to communicate a psychological understanding to the parents so that the behavior of their child can be better understood and the child-rearing practices can be altered if indicated.\textsuperscript{101}

Faust holds the position that the counselor, as a consultant, focuses on external variables, such as course content, instructional method or a child, rather than on the teacher's feelings. Consultation with teachers consist of the exploration of data, information, and ideas with an accepting environment. This is most often practiced through (a) "an in-service course type of experience," which is concerned with the psychology of child development and (b) "the staffing of cases," which involves the sharing of data pertaining to the child and the planning of a course of action.\textsuperscript{102}

The preceding discussion by several leaders in guidance has attempted to define the consultative function of the elementary school counselor. Most agree that it entails a meeting together of counselor, teachers, administrators and parents to determine a course of action which will benefit the child. This may take the form of in-service, "staffing" of cases or individual consultation to teachers and principals.


Summary

In brief, there is much controversy regarding the role of the counselor in the elementary school. In spite of the vagueness of the elementary school counselor's role, there persists a request for qualified counselors at this level. Many attempts are being made to clarify his role. The functions of coordinating, counseling and consulting seem to be primary according to authorities in the field of guidance and counseling. Discussion exists as to which function of the three is most important.

Counseling of the child requires a variation of skills and knowledge on the part of the counselor. The counselor must deal not only with the child but with "significant others" upon whom the child is psychologically dependent.

Group counseling has come into the forefront, mainly because it enables the child to learn how to relate to his peers and to develop insight into his own behavior through peer feedback. In group counseling, the child is encouraged to test out new approaches to his problems.

Throughout the research, it becomes apparent that techniques used in counseling must be in accordance with the age and maturity of the client. The type of counseling utilized in high school may not be effective at the fourth and fifth grade levels.

It is also clearly evident from the research that a team approach is necessary at the elementary level. A team consisting of at least counselor, teachers, administrators and parents to determine a course of action which will benefit the child.
CHAPTER III
PREPARATION, CERTIFICATION AND STATUS
OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Focus on the adequacy of the professional preparation of individuals at the elementary school level has been of great concern, in the past decade, to counselor educators. Faust, commenting on the formal preparation programs designed specifically for elementary school counselors, said: "The extent to which the colleges and universities will prepare elementary, rather than pseudo-elementary school counselors, in the decade just ahead, will decide whether in fact the field will possess any appreciable future." Van Hoose, also emphasizing the preparation programs of school counselors, observed that: "Presumably, most elementary school counselors have some formal preparation for their new jobs; however, since models for counselor preparation at the elementary level were new or nonexistent a decade ago, it is unlikely that the first elementary school counselors received much specialized training for their new role." Hill and Nitzschke reporting on the recommendations of 154


directors of master's programs, for elementary school guidance concluded that:

"Preparation programs for guidance workers in elementary schools are as yet not well defined. Some of these programs make little, if any, differentiation between preparation for the elementary school and preparation for the secondary school. Very few universities have clearly planned programs for the preparation of guidance workers in elementary schools ... It would seem that the time is at hand for leaders in elementary education and in guidance to combine their judgements to formulate a clearer definition of elementary school guidance."

In 1964, Nitschke continued to explore counselor education programs for the preparation of elementary school guidance workers and found the following general characteristics:

1. Most of the programs were quite new.
2. There were definite differences between programs at the elementary and secondary levels.
3. Greater emphasis was placed on child development, child study and elementary counseling as opposed to vocational development.
4. Stressed was the developmental guidance and the consultative role of the elementary school counselor.
5. More than half of the enrollees major in elementary education, are certified, and have taught in elementary schools.
6. The majority of counselor educators responsible for instruction of the

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elementary school counselor program have a secondary school background. (6) A majority of the institutions provide supervised experience both on and off campus. (7) Approximately forty one per cent of the institutions require enrollees to have teaching experience. 108 Further examination of current programs and of research completed in the preparatory area of guidance counselors in elementary schools revealed both a generality or vagueness and a considerable degree of commonality of purpose and content. Emphasis is strongly upon the study of children and their development. 109 An effective program seems to be emerging around a background in education and the behavioral sciences as well as in professional studies and supervised practical experience. 110 Slight modifications appear, however, where consultation rather

108 Hill, op. cit., p. 54.

ACES-ASCA, op. cit., p. 12.

Dinkmeyer, op. cit., pp. 11-14.


McDougall and Reitan, op. cit., pp. 349-351.

Merle M. Ohlsen, "Standards for the Preparation of Elementary School Counselors," Counselor Education and Supervision, (Spring, 1968),
than counseling becomes the main counselor function. The reason being that the functions performed by the counselor determine the personal qualifications and the professional preparation required for this position. The writer discusses this in detail later in his thesis.

It is generally felt by leaders in guidance and counseling that the educational background of the elementary school guidance counselor should prepare him with sufficient knowledge and understanding of the purpose and organization of the elementary school, school curriculum and the philosophy of schools. It is further felt that the behavioral sciences should provide the counselor with information in the areas of psychology and sociology which emphasizes child growth and development, personality dynamics, dynamics of family living, group dynamics and theories of learning. In regard to the behavioral sciences, McDougall and Reitan's survey revealed that elementary

pp. 172-178.


Johnston, op. cit., p. 39.

Meeks, op. cit., p. 227.

Ohlsen, op. cit., pp. 174-175.

Meeks, op. cit., p. 227.

Dinkmeyer, op. cit., pp. 11-16.

school principals perceived that extensive coursework in the area of psychology is essential to the nature of the elementary school counselor's training. More than two-thirds of the principals indicated that child psychology and the psychology of learning are necessary in preparatory training. Furthermore, coursework in individual differences, adolescent psychology, psychology of personality and psychology of adjustment were recognized as basic by about half of the respondents to the survey. McDougall and Reitan's investigation in the area of professional studies indicated that fifty percent or more of the elementary school principals considered coursework in principles of guidance, individual testing, group tests and counseling theory as vital in the counselor's total education.\textsuperscript{112} A mastery of these professional skills cannot, however, be learned solely from didactic coursework.\textsuperscript{113} Ohlsen pointed out that the preparation program must provide prospective counselors with an opportunity to actively participate in and to actively learn to live their role under supervised experience.\textsuperscript{114} Hill and Nitzschke, examining the data from masters degree programs, concluded that very few institutions of higher learning had planned programs in the preparation of elementary school guidance counselors.\textsuperscript{115} In spite of the apparent lack of clarity concerning the

\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{112} McDougall and Reitan, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 348-350.
  \item\textsuperscript{113} Meeks, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 226.
  \item\textsuperscript{114} Ohlsen, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 175.
  \item\textsuperscript{115} Raines, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 57.
\end{itemize}
direction of counselor preparation at the elementary level, Raines insists that inherent in every student counselor's training must be supervised practicum experience. He attempts to support his position by presenting an approach to practicum which is being experimented with at Ohio University. The University offers one semester practicum experience for elementary school counselors which includes three basic activities: (1) Supervised experience working as a counselor with elementary school children and their parents, (2) Weekly participation in group seminar sessions with other enrollees, and (3) Individual conferences each week with the counselor-educator. Ohio State's supervised experience enables the student-counselor to divide his five hours per week in an elementary school between classroom guidance activities and counseling. A portion of the counselor's time is spent with only one classroom of children. Here he performs activities geared to help children understand their own behavior, their peer relationships, their strengths and weaknesses, the world of work and how to deal with emotions. Counseling activities involve, primarily, individual interviews. Opportunities are provided to conduct group counseling sessions with six to eight pupils, if the counselor wishes. A typical three hour seminar session meets each week allocating one-half of the session to group counseling. The other, more structured half, involves discussions of content in the form of readings, tape recordings, etc. The individual conferences involve a one-to-one evaluation and analysis session between the practicum student and the counselor providing feedback to the

\[116\] Ibid., pp. 57-58.
student. Ohlsen, adapting the Joint ACES-ASCA Committee Report on Counselor Education Standards in the Preparation of Secondary School Counselors, perceives supervised experience as three-fold—laboratory experiences, practicum experiences, and internship. In actuality, the author equated these aspects to an advanced level of on-the-job training. This entailed observation activities such as listening to tapes, participation activities such as counseling with pupils and consultation activities such as with teachers, parents and community. While Raines and Ohlsen promote the practicum or internship training, principals, in McDougall's and Reitan's study, placed less importance on this type of training. This discrepancy appears to indicate a need for more research into elementary school training and which type of experience is most beneficial. Perhaps the traditional or secondary school method is the most advantageous.

With the spontaneous emergence of the role of the counselor as a consultant, graduate schools may be forced to recognize the practical value of establishing consultation as a major function of the elementary school counselor. Colleges and universities are beginning to organize programs for the preparation of guidance consultants as opposed to guidance counselors.

119McDougal and Reitan, op. cit., pp. 354.


Teachers College at Columbia University is a prime example of a program offering one, two or three years sequence at the elementary level. 121

Emphasizing consultation as the primary function in an elementary school counselor's role means that greater concern and stress must be placed upon relating effectively and communicating with a variety of people in the child's life; adults as well as the child. Coursework must provide skills in human relationships and communication. Experience must be provided in the area of consultant relationships with teachers, administrators as well as with children and teachers. 122

Tentative requirements in the selection and preparation of guidance consultants have been suggested by Eckerson and Smith. They propose the following guidelines:

1. A liberal arts background for the candidate with either an undergraduate major in elementary education, psychology, sociology, or any other related areas.

2. Several years' experience in a school, clinic or comparable agency.

3. An individualized or flexible graduate program which would meet the special needs of a particular school or area in which the candidate expects to be employed.

4. The preparation for guidance consultants be focused on the elementary school guidance program's function of identification and prevention.

5. The acceptance of an appropriate internship in an elementary school in lieu of teaching experience.

6. The acceptance of an appropriate professional experience in working with children in lieu of teaching experience. 123

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Patterns of selection and preparation appear to be in the early stages of development, and as the movement intensifies, and experimentation and evaluation increases, professional standards which will most adequately prepare a candidate for his role may be established. Preparation at the elementary level should definitely include a complete understanding of the developmental process of the child's early years. Clear delineation of a child's nature as a personality, distinct from an infant, an adolescent, youth or adult must be totally comprehended in order to effectively aid the child in realizing his full potentials.

Two unresolved issues which appeared to be of some importance, but discussed very little in the literature, was that of teaching prerequisites for counselors and the length of time needed for counselor preparation. Principals, responding to McDougall and Reitan's survey favored teaching experience; as did principals and counselors in California elementary schools. Fifty-seven school districts were represented in the California study.\(^{124}\) In relation to the length of counselor preparation, a sample of articles reviewed by the writer indicated that a two year program for counselor preparation was favored.\(^{125}\)

\(^{124}\) McDougall and Reitan, "The Elementary Counselor," pp. 351, 354.
California Research Brief, #13, pp. 1,6.

Eckerson and Smith, op. cit., p. 116.
Certification of counselors provide some standards by which the administrators are able to ascertain certain minimum qualifications in the selection of counselors. To date, thirty-two states and one territory have certification for elementary school counselors, while only fourteen states have developed certification requirements for elementary school counselors that are appreciably different from secondary certification. In actual practice, several states certify counselors for grades K-12 with no specific requirements for elementary school certification. 126

As more knowledge is gained about the elementary school counselor's functions and responsibilities, his preparation and training for the role will be more definitively structured and strengthened. Requirements for certification of counselors have been individually established by each state, but have been mainly designed for secondary school counselors. Presently, however, an attempt has been made to establish certification standards for elementary school counselors. In the past and occasionally, today, the practice has been to provide certification to certified elementary school teachers who have completed substantially the same counselor-certification courses as the counselors in secondary school. 127

Although there has been a trend toward establishing a separate training

127 Ibid., p. 403.
program for the elementary school counselor, this concept has not been implemented fully in practice. 128 This lag is understandable, since there is general disagreement between what is taking place and that which is preferred or desired by the leaders of the movement. What is needed to put their beliefs and ideas into practice is time, patience and determination by all individuals interested and involved in guidance and counseling. Progress, though slow, has been made in the development of more meaningful training programs for elementary school counselors. A distinction is also being made between the nature of training for the traditional and the elementary school counselor. 129

As the role of the guidance counselor becomes crystalized, certification requirements will become clearer, and the counselor will seek training above and beyond certification requirements; for a guidance program is as effective as the counselors participating in it.

Research conducted by Van Hoose and Vafakos investigated some aspects of elementary school guidance and counseling in the fifty states and the four American territories. A questionnaire was mailed to state directors or supervisors of guidance. The results were that there are 3,637 counselors now serving in elementary schools. The majority of the elementary school counselors have held prior positions as elementary teachers. Study of standards in the states and territories revealed that 31 states and one territory have developed and published standards pertaining to guidance in the

129 Nitzschke and Hill, op. cit., pp. 16-20.
elementary school. These standards are vague. A study by Hill found that only 15 states had published standards on guidance in the elementary school. It was vividly demonstrated throughout the study that status standards for elementary school guidance counselors lack specificity. In some cases such standards were non-existent. 130

The status of the counselor in the elementary school is in a state of flux. What it is and will be are continually being analyzed and evaluated by educators. It is far from the ideal, but progress is being made as is seen in the increasing numbers of elementary school guidance programs throughout the country. Following are several educators' opinions and research regarding the present and future status of the elementary school guidance counselor.

Presently, much is done by the counselor in the field of measurement. Standardized tests of ability, aptitude and achievement are given, nation-wide, to pupils by guidance counselors. This has helped greatly in planning educational experiences to meet individual needs. However, there is an increasing awareness of the limitations of testing.

The understanding of behavior has increased over the past four decades. Case histories, anecdotal records, home visits and sociometric techniques have all aided in this understanding and in the development of the guidance program.

A third contributing force in the field of guidance has been the systematic, planned program of vocational guidance first developed by Frank Van Hoose and Vafakas, op. cit., pp. 536-539.
Up to the present time guidance has been largely a function of the secondary school. It is apparent, however, that the classroom teacher cannot be all things to all students. This is evident in the dropout rate, the bright underachiever and the emotionally disturbed child. A definite need exists for specialized help to assist the classroom teacher at the elementary level.

Along with the need for specialized guidance help is a concern as to the functions and preparation of the guidance counselor. At the present time there is little agreement as to the precise functions and preparation of the elementary school counselor. This is discussed in detail in the preceding chapter. Attempts to remedy this situation are in process. The American Personnel and Guidance Association has established a Commission on Elementary School Guidance to bring together elementary teachers, administrators as well as authorities in the field of elementary school guidance. To determine how a team consisting of specialists in elementary and secondary schools can more adequately meet the needs of children and youth, the Interprofessional Research Commission on Pupil Personnel Services was set up.\textsuperscript{132}

Anna Meeks claims that the future emphasis will be on prevention and the developing child. A team approach will be utilized which will encourage the child's strengths and interests, point out his weaknesses and help him in overcoming them. Increased attention will be given to the first grader so that

\textsuperscript{131}Cottingham, op. cit., pp. 203-207.

problems in learning will be discovered and corrected early in the child's career.\textsuperscript{133}

Both Meeks and Riccio emphasize the establishment of a training program and an examination of the presently existing ones. They feel that the major tasks in the next decade will be co-ordination of guidance facilities for the students, teachers and parents in the schools and in the communities. Less emphasis will be placed on individual counseling.\textsuperscript{134}

In setting up an elementary school guidance program, according to Riccio, the aims of guidance and education must be the same. Both aim toward helping the child develop his potentialities so that he will make a useful contribution to society.\textsuperscript{135}

Cottingham has proposed a position paper on the national level which would discuss and examine some of the issues and concerns in the field of elementary guidance. His paper would provide a guidance philosophy, describe the identifying characteristics of school guidance and propose means by which a unified program of elementary guidance could be developed.\textsuperscript{136}

Although preparation standards for elementary school counselors have not reached the sophistication of secondary school standards, progress has been

\textsuperscript{133}Meeks, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 225. \hspace{1cm} Riccio, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 40.
\textsuperscript{134}Meeks, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 320-324.
\textsuperscript{135}Riccio, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{136}Cottingham, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 46-47.
made toward developing some guidelines for educational institutions to follow. A background in educational and behavioral sciences which emphasize child development has been supported by authorities in the field of guidance. In addition, stress has been placed upon work, professional studies and supervised experience. Experiences in functions relating to counseling and consultation appear to be of paramount importance.

To date, only 14 states have developed certification requirements for elementary school counselors that are appreciably different from secondary certification.

In regard to the status of the counselor, research and evaluation by educators seem to indicate that it is far from ideal.
Summary

In short, most of the elementary school programs in guidance and counseling are new. The emphasis of the programs is on child development.

It is generally felt by leading authorities in the field that the background of the counselor at this level should include course-work, educational and behavioral sciences as well as professional studies and guidance and supervised practicum. Some authors feel that an internship should be added.

A major area of contention that exists in regard to preparation of the guidance counselor is that of teaching prerequisites for counselors and the length of time needed for counselor preparation.

Certification provides minimum qualifications in the selection of counselor. At the present time, merely fifteen states have published standards on guidance and counseling at the elementary level that are substantially different from secondary certification.

Further intensive research of the status, preparation and certification of the elementary school counselor is clearly indicated.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

Most of the descriptions or identifications of the counselor's role have been superficial in nature, presumably because much of the literature has been emphasizing the theoretical rather than the practical aspects of elementary school counseling. However, two factors must be considered: (1) the relative youth of the elementary school counselor program and (2) theory usually precedes practice.

A review of the literature showed significantly that a consensus of educators appear to agree upon a threefold function as the basis of a counselor's role: (a) counseling, individual and group, (b) consulting with parents, teachers and administrators, and (c) coordination, acting as liaison among teachers, parents, administrators and community. Despite discord over which is the main function, counseling or consulting, it remains an unresolved issue which could result in uncertainty and possible elimination of the role.

Counseling, as a primary function of elementary school counselors appears to be favored by some educators because it can be taken from the secondary level and be applied easily and readily to the elementary level. Another supportive argument for counseling is that both individual and small group counseling can better provide assistance to children in the normal process of growing up as they seek to understand themselves, meet the developmental tasks of childhood, learn effectively and develop realistic self-concepts.
Those authors who favor consultation as the main responsibility of the elementary school counselor rely heavily on the combined efforts and knowledge of teachers, parents and administrators to assist him to better help the child. This is a team approach which enables the counselor to indirectly reach more pupils in less time. Some authorities believe that the inability of the young counselee to verbalize his problems and views, minimizes the effectiveness of counseling. Thus, consultation with significant persons in the child's life allows the counselor to overcome this handicap.

No uniform preparatory standards have been established for counselors at the elementary school level. Present guidelines emphasize course-work, education and behavioral sciences as well as professional studies and guidance, and supervised practicum experience at this level.

It is clearly evident to the writer that increased research is needed in the area of elementary school counselor function and preparation. Basic standards are needed from which the graduate counselor could function and, if he wishes, establish an elementary school guidance training program.

Few persons who are writing and talking about elementary school guidance services are in agreement. There are few practices toward which a counselor educator can look for assistance in establishing an elementary school guidance program. I cannot help but feel that "For the present we will have to continue to operate on the level of faith, but by all means it should be a faith that is enlightened by reason."\(^{137}\)

\(^{137}\)Riccio, op. cit., p. 41.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Charles A. Giglio, has been read and approved by members of the School of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Date: June 2, 1970
Signature of Advisor: [Signature]