



An Analysis of Career Counseling Services at the Elementary Level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K

Dr. Muhammad Naqeeb ul Khalil Shaheen¹, Nosheen Rashid² & Mahnoor Hussain³

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: naqeeb.shaheen@gmail.com

²M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: nosheenrashid001@gmail.com

³M. Phil Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kotli AJ&K, Email: mahnoorhussain2375@gmail.com

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Corresponding Author:

Dr. Muhammad Naqeeb ul Khalil Shaheen

Email:

naqeeb.shaheen@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research, which is quantitative and uses a survey method, aimed to evaluate the career counseling services available at the elementary school level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It primarily focused on exploring five main counseling services: appraisal, placement, referral, remedial, and informational services being offered to elementary school children. The research method used was a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The study population was 1,569 students of elementary classes from government elementary schools of Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K. A simple random sample of 350 students was selected. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire comprising 15 items was developed and content validity was established by subject matter experts. Reliability was checked by Cronbach's alpha. Data collection was carried out by the researcher personally, and the analysis of the data was performed using percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation. The study shows that a large proportion of students do not agree that appraisal, placement, referral, and remedial services are being provided to them. On the other hand, students expressed agreement that informational services are provided. The results of the study throw light on the fact that the elementary schools provide only informational services to students without an in-depth counseling program at the elementary level. The main source of all these services are the teachers as there is no professional counselor at the elementary level. The suggestions recommend career counseling at the elementary level to orient students about career awareness and educational choices as well as the provision of appraisal, placement, referral, and remedial services to students.



Introduction

The effectiveness of an education system is, to a great extent, determined by the quality of supporting services that are made available to students. Career counseling has become an essential element of elementary education, as it allows students to acquire early knowledge and awareness of their academic as well as future professional paths. According to studies, children's occupational dreams start to take shape from early childhood, and different social, educational, and experiential factors influence them (Rosvall & Ledman, 2025). The major target for offering excellent education is not limited to academic teaching only but also providing guidance services that help students through smooth transitions to successive educational levels and eventually to their career.

elementary school career counseling is a professionally facilitated process to support young children in their initial steps of self-awareness, understanding learning and work domains, and establishing the basis for making informed decisions about education and life. Early career development goes way beyond preparing students for academic work alone; it involves self-exploration, becoming aware of skills, and sparking interest in the world of work. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model portrays the comprehensive approach to the program of school counseling which motivates student progress and outlines the role of school counselors in students' support from K to 12 (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

In the past few years, narrative-based career counseling programs for primary school students have completely revolutionized career exploration, career and talent development self-efficacy, and overall career development of children in a very short time (Öztürk & Siyez, 2025). These results are proof of the need for structured career guidance programs at the elementary level.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir Government approved a new Education Policy 2023-2040 for community/non-government schools under which elementary education was made compulsory for all children. The policy also focuses on reaching 100% enrollment of children in primary schools and giving free textbooks. Besides that, the centre aims to start educational campaigns all over the region to enroll out of school children and set up teacher training academies to raise the quality of education (Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, 2023). However, even with these policy measures, the situation of counseling services in schools is very poor, especially at the elementary level.

Studies carried out in Azad Jammu and Kashmir have measured the career aspiration index of young people based on their achievement, leadership, and educational aspirations, and then found the role of career counseling and mentorship to be significant in forming career aspirations of young people (Summera & Yasmin, 2023). This study is very important for identifying the counselling needs of students in the region.

Developmental theories suggest that elementary students are at the early stages of career development and that their exposure to different opportunities and their positive attitude towards learning are key. Super (1990) defined a career as "the life course of a person experiencing a series of developmental tasks and trying to deal with them in such a way as to become the kind of person he or she wants to become" (p. 198). The growth stage that includes a child from birth to about age 14 is the time when career exploration, career awareness, career wishes and expectations, career interests, and career adaptability start to develop (Super, 1990).

Pakistan's National Education Policy Framework (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, 2018) has highlighted a range of challenges such as the large number of out-of-school children, the segregation of education, the quality of education, and skill development, among

others. The goal of the policy was that every child should have a just and equal opportunity to get high-standard education in order to grow up as a complete human being.

Problem Statement

In the absence of career counseling at the primary level, students are not even taught to be aware of their intents, capabilities, and the different learning options they can pursue in the future. To them, the school-going phase is a period of discovering the world of knowledge rather than planning their life and career. Many instructive researches have shown that students in elementary schools do not have access to career counseling services that can help them identify their strengths, introduce them to career awareness activities fair for their level, and help them develop a more positive attitude toward learning. The results of a study on career aspirations of young people in AJ&K show that career counseling and guidance are major factors in influencing the orientation of students towards the future.

Objectives of the Study

The study pursued the following objectives:

1. To analyze the availability of appraisal services for career planning and strengths identification at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K.
2. To examine the availability of placement services for guiding students toward appropriate learning activities and peer experiences.
3. To assess the availability of referral services for connecting students with specialized professional support.
4. To evaluate the availability of remedial services for students with learning differences and developmental needs.
5. To determine the availability of informational services regarding educational opportunities and learning pathways.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the availability of appraisal services at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K?
2. What is the availability of placement services at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K?
3. What is the availability of referral services at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K?
4. What is the availability of remedial services at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K?
5. What is the availability of informational services at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K?

Significance of the Study

Elementary schools mostly focus on raising student success and preparing students for educational challenges ahead. One effective way is to implement comprehensive support services including early career awareness and counseling sessions which not only improve student outcomes but also create an excellent environment fostering personal and academic development. The results obtained from this research will be instrumental for students to realize the significance of early career awareness. Consequently, post-research students will have a better grip on delineating their leisure pursuits finding emerging talents and abilities and forming the most positive attitudes towards learning. Besides that, improvement teaching methods and boosting teacher skills in offering basic career guidance is the significant merit of the paper. In a similar vein it will enlighten parents to support their children in early education planning to discover their children's strengths and interests and to guide their positive growth. Additionally, the research findings might serve as a basis for the implementation of professional counseling services in elementary schools.

Review of the Related Literature

Counseling: Conceptual Framework

Counseling is a learning process where a trained professional aids a person or a group to get to know themselves and their environment, thereby being able to select the right behaviors that promote their development in education, profession, and social-personally. It is a change-engendering activity of assisting individuals to learn what is necessary for them to learn both inside and outside the school setting. Counseling is a face-to-face communication wherein one person is supported by another in order to change, grow or become able to solve problems. Sometimes it may be done in groups of two or more different individuals. Up to date studies revealed that guidance and holding counseling sessions with students, also appraisal, referral and follow-up services, have a strong positive impact on students' behavior patterns and discipline by assisting to observe, assess and give them proper interventions (Bawo & Agi, 2025).

At elementary level, career counseling means to help little kids learn some basic information about themselves and their learning and work environment. It means to guide them with simple ways how to get interested in learning, make friends, recognize their different abilities, etc. Career counseling at this level isn't just talking to kids once in a while but doing a lot of things like showing them who they are becoming, letting them see different jobs and occupations through the use of activities that are good for their level of development, arousing their interest in the world and building a good image of themselves.

Life and career planning should begin quite early in a child's education. It is a lifelong, spiraling process. The theories of child development by Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky, combined with career development theories of Super and Gottfredson, offer very good reasons why career awareness activities should start when children are at the elementary school level (American School Counselor Association, 2019). Career development refers to the whole process of a person's working life. It starts with the growth (childhood) stage and moves through exploration (adolescence), establishment (early adulthood), maintenance (middle adulthood), and disengagement (late adulthood; Super, 1990).

The research about narrative-based online career group counseling program for fourth-grade primary school students reports statistically significant positive results on career exploration, career and talent development self-efficacy, and career development, which prove that a really

good structured program may also effectively help children's career development (Öztürk & Siyez, 2025).

Career Counseling Services at Elementary School Level

Career guidance counseling can equip every student in schools with the skills and knowledge to make the most of their educational experiences and even start to realize their potential at an early age. The ASCA National Framework represents a dual strategy for crafting, delivering, and judging a school counseling program that advances student achievement. The framework comprises direct student services, such as school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services, as well as indirect student services, such as referrals, consultation, and collaboration, which are the primary means of a full school counseling program (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

There are many different counseling services, for example, appraisal, information, placement, orientation, assessment, referral, and follow-up. All of these elements respond to students' developmental needs, aspirations, and problems by using methods that are appropriate to their age.

Appraisal services. The key to career counseling provision of robust support to elementary school students for self-understanding and learning style discovery lies in familiarizing oneself with students' emergent talents and interests. This necessitates the use of age-appropriate tools to determine each child's abilities, level of interest, and favored way of learning. It has been found that appraisal services have a deep impact on students' conduct by making it possible for counselors and teachers to evaluate student needs, highlight areas of student difficulty that may warrant intervention, and design student support services accordingly (Bawo & Agi, 2025).

Placement services. Placement services at the basic school level help students to come across and get involved with suitable activities in class, peer groups and school experiences. Students who take part in activities in which they can succeed and develop low self-esteem benefit the most. These are the types of services that allow young children to go through learning experiences matching their level of development and interests (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

Referral services. These are counseling services intended for those students who cannot be sufficiently guided by the teachers or counselors in a typical classroom environment. These services involve that specialized help is provided to students who need it, beyond the level that a regular classroom setting can offer. After a teacher or counselor has identified a student who needs help, they will give the student a referral to a qualified expert for further assistance. Moreover, they will keep in contact and check on the student's progress. Research has shown that referral services play an important role in student needs management by facilitating student access to professional and intervention support services (Bawo & Agi, 2025).

Remedial services. Similar to referral services, remedial services are a type of specialized assistance that physically touch the students with learning differences, developmental delays, or other problems who need more support. Such students must receive considerably more time than that which is offered to regular students.

Informational services. Through informational services, students and their families are given the essential information about the courses made available to them, developmental milestones, and learning resources. The main goal of informational services is to assist students and families in becoming familiar with the different educational routes available to them, clarifying options, and making informed decisions about early educational experiences.

Need for Career Counseling at Elementary Level

Elementary school students need basic guidance in multiple areas of life. Students may be asked to think about their interests, develop positive attitudes toward learning, and build self-awareness about their unique qualities from the beginning of schooling. This support leads to a greater sense of self and curiosity that is necessary for academic success later on.

Career counseling lays a groundwork for career awareness. Career counseling in elementary school students lays the greatest foundation for career development since it increases positive thinking toward oneself and awareness of the many career possibilities that exist beyond the local community.

Discovering talent. During the last years of their time at the small and middle-grades level, students will have a chance to form their abilities and interests in different areas. Age-appropriate counseling will equip students and teachers to discern these strengths that have been developing.

Positively influencing the learning process. Being through the door in a friendly way to school and learning contributes greatly to staying engaged academically for a lifetime. Career awareness experiences at the elementary level may spark interest and work motivation.

Enhancing self-awareness. Learning in the earliest grades not only provides students with knowledge but also offers them insights into their own feelings, interests, and learning styles. This self-awareness is the foundation of future decision-making (Super, 1990).

Connecting learning to future possibilities. Young children, through grade school, start realizing the link between what they learn now and what kinds of jobs they might get in the future when they get small doses, pieces of information, about various roles and occupations fitting their age. One of the studies that was done shows that a person's schooling and what career the person would like to do get decided in a way to a child very early on. At those years, things like gender, race, and living standard can make a person's life very different (Rosvall & Ledman, 2025).

Status of Counseling at Elementary Level

Schools at the elementary level play an essential role not only in helping children at different levels of capability, talent, and interest develop but also in getting them ready for further success at school. Pupils in the elementary level are generally at a few main developmental stages which include curiosity, the beginning of self-concept, and the development of basic skills. Based on a thorough knowledge of child development, effective counseling programs are indispensable for students' development.

Career Counseling in Azad Jammu and Kashmir

While the rest of the world is changing step by step, educational systems are also one step ahead with the changes. On the contrary, the students of Azad Jammu and Kashmir including those studying in elementary schools are still very much deprived when it comes to counseling and guidance services. These children hardly get to know about many different things in life or be given supports with making themselves aware before they make up their mind about their futures. This is the reason the, lack of proper career guidance and counseling is noticed at every educational level. Some researches that have been done can find out which things are making the careers of young people in Azad Jammu and Kashmir the aspirations they are have pointed out the very big impact career counseling and mentorship have on shaping the youth's education desire, achievement, and leadership aspiration in the region (Summera & Yasmin, 2023).

For youth empowerment to trust, confidence, and hope to be their dividend, they have first to be made capable of forming a positive self-concept and developing a yearning for knowledge through learning at a very young age. Proper guidance and a range of activities are the main ingredients for healthy growth and give rise to a feeling of being able. Educational institutes in Azad Jammu and Kashmir are going through a transition to meet these challenges; however, elementary counseling is still quite a neglected area.

In most educational institutions of AJ&K systematic counseling programs are almost non-existent at the elementary education level. Education policy of the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (2023) has acknowledged that guidance is a necessary element and the new Education Policy 2023, 2040 highlights teacher training and educational quality improvement as major parts of the guidance program. A little bit of recognition has been given to this need but the arrangement for career counseling at elementary levels is definitely not up to the mark in AJ&K. Students coming from far-off areas like Tehsil Nakyal have the greatest difficulty in getting access to the limited services available to them.

Methodology

The study implemented a quantitative research methodology with descriptive cross-sectional survey design to evaluate career counseling services at the elementary school level in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K. Elementary classes students from government girls elementary schools of Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K represented the entire population. There are 1, 569 students in this population. By employing a simple random sampling technique, the authors picked 350 students to be the sample. As the instrument to collect data for this research, the authors developed a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of 15 items related to five career counseling services at the elementary level. Two experts from the Department of Education, University of Kotli, validated the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha statistical technique was used to check reliability. 30 students were used for piloting the instrument to check for accuracy and language. In person, data collection was done by the researcher, and all questionnaires were distributed and returned. Collected data were analyzed using percentage, mean scores, and standard deviation by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

The results are presented in tables aligned with the study objectives.

Appraisal Services

Table 1: Availability of Appraisal Services

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	M	SD
Career planning per abilities	28	22	50	2.65	1.35
Determining strengths/interests	52	18	30	3.28	1.28
Occupational awareness assistance	25	20	55	2.58	1.32

Interpretation of Table 1. Students largely disagreed that appraisal services are provided. Career planning: 50% disagreed, 28% agreed ($M = 2.65$, neutral). Strengths/interests: 52% agreed, 30% disagreed ($M = 3.28$, neutral). Occupational awareness: 55% disagreed, 25% agreed ($M = 2.58$, neutral). Overall, appraisal services are perceived as inadequate.

Placement Services

Table 2: Availability of Placement Services

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	M	SD
Guidance to appropriate activities	22	18	60	2.48	1.25
Help with suitable classroom engagement	28	20	52	2.62	1.28
Finding appropriate peer experiences	18	15	67	2.32	1.18

Interpretation of Table 2. Majority disagreed that placement services exist. Guidance: 60% disagreed, 22% agreed ($M = 2.48$, disagree). Engagement: 52% disagreed, 28% agreed ($M = 2.62$, neutral). Peer experiences: 67% disagreed, 18% agreed ($M = 2.32$, disagree). This indicates significant gaps in placement services.

Referral Services

Table 3: Availability of Referral Services

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	M	SD
Help getting additional support	18	15	67	2.30	1.15
Services for special developmental help	20	18	62	2.42	1.20
Advice for specialized assistance	15	14	71	2.18	1.10

Interpretation of Table 3. Overwhelming majority disagreed that referral services are provided. Additional support: 67% disagreed, 18% agreed ($M = 2.30$, disagree). Special help: 62% disagreed, 20% agreed ($M = 2.42$, disagree). Specialized assistance: 71% disagreed, 15% agreed ($M = 2.18$, disagree). These results demonstrate critical absence of referral mechanisms.

Remedial Services

Table 4: Availability of Remedial Services

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	M	SD
Services for learning differences	22	16	62	2.38	1.22
Support for developmental needs	16	14	70	2.15	1.08
Activities for foundational skills	28	20	52	2.58	1.25

Interpretation of Table 4. Majority disagreed that remedial services are provided. Learning differences: 62% disagreed, 22% agreed ($M = 2.38$, disagree). Developmental needs: 70% disagreed, 16% agreed ($M = 2.15$, disagree). Foundational skills: 52% disagreed, 28% agreed ($M = 2.58$, neutral). This highlights severe deficiencies in remedial support.

Informational Services

Table 5: Availability of Informational Services

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	M	SD
Information on educational opportunities	78	12	10	4.05	0.92
Help understanding learning-future links	72	15	13	3.85	0.98
Information on learning pathways	68	18	14	3.72	1.02

Interpretation of Table 5. In contrast to other services, majority agreed that informational services are provided. Educational opportunities: 78% agreed, 10% disagreed ($M = 4.05$, agree). Learning-future links: 72% agreed, 13% disagreed ($M = 3.85$, agree). Learning pathways: 68% agreed, 14% disagreed ($M = 3.72$, agree). Informational services represent the primary strength of current counseling provisions.

Summary of Career Counseling Services

Table 6: Summary of Career Counseling Services

Service Type	N	M	SD	Interpretation
Appraisal Services	350	2.84	1.25	Neutral
Placement Services	350	2.47	1.18	Disagree
Referral Services	350	2.30	1.12	Disagree
Remedial Services	350	2.37	1.15	Disagree
Informational Services	350	3.87	0.95	Agree

Interpretation of Table 6. Summary statistics reveal that informational services received the highest mean score ($M = 3.87$), indicating strong agreement with their availability. Conversely, placement ($M = 2.47$), referral ($M = 2.30$), and remedial services ($M = 2.37$) received mean scores indicating disagreement with their provision. Appraisal services fell in the neutral range ($M = 2.84$). This pattern confirms that only informational services are consistently available to students at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal.

Discussions

This study's findings indicate that elementary school students in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K, have limited access to comprehensive career counseling services. While informational services are relatively available ($M = 3.87$, 78% agreement), appraisal ($M = 2.84$), placement ($M = 2.47$), referral ($M = 2.30$), and remedial services ($M = 2.37$) remain substantially deficient.

Appraisal Services

The neutral average scores that appraisal services received suggest, on the one hand, that their availability is inconsistent, but on the other hand, that it is not completely absent. For instance, 52% students agreed that they are to some extent assessed for their strengths and interests, while only 28% students reported availability of career planning services. This inconsistency squares with the fact that that most students do not have a systematic and comprehensive assessment of their developing abilities, the interests and learning styles. Without proper advice services, students cannot gain the initial self-knowledge which is a prerequisite for subsequent educational and occupational decision-making. Studies have revealed that appraisal services are a major factor in student outcomes as they assist counselors and teachers in analyzing students' needs and making a plan for intervention where needed (Bawo & Agi, 2025). What is more, this is quite disturbing considering that one study by AJ&K indicates that career counseling has a major impact on the achievement and educational aspiration of youth (Summera & Yasmin, 2023). Career development in the growing stage is instrumental in allowing the person to build awareness about the career and have a positive attitude towards learning through the rest of the life (Super, 1990).

Placement Services

Placement services are part and parcel for students' participation in appropriate activities in the classrooms and are a way of students' gaining confidence through successful experiences. The

drastic shortcoming in placement services indicates the problems in elementary guidance for students engaging with appropriate learning experiences. For instance, 67% students indicate that they do not have any help in finding suitable peer experiences ($M = 2.32$). The lack of placement services may lead to student disinterest and overlooking opportunities for forming attitudes that are positive to the learning process. The ASCA National Model emphasizes that school counselors should provide direct student services including individual student planning to help students establish personal goals and develop future plans (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

Referral Services

The lack of referral services represents a critical gap, with 71% of students reporting inability to access specialized assistance ($M = 2.18$). Students with specialized needs requiring attention beyond the capacity of regular classroom teachers have no established pathways to access appropriate professional support. This finding is consistent with observations that counseling services in Pakistani educational institutions remain underdeveloped, with limited professional counselor availability, particularly at elementary levels. Studies have established that referral services are essential components of comprehensive counseling programs, helping to connect students with specialized professional support and appropriate intervention services (Bawo & Agi, 2025). The ASCA National Model identifies referrals as a key component of indirect student services (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

Remedial Services

The deficiency in remedial services is particularly concerning, with 70% of students reporting lack of support for developmental needs ($M = 2.15$). Students requiring specialized interventions are currently underserved. This gap perpetuates educational inequities and limits opportunities for students with diverse learning needs. Early intervention through remedial services significantly improves long-term educational outcomes for students with learning differences.

Informational Services

Although the provision of informational services at a level that is on par with students' needs is promising ($M = 3.87$, 78% of students agreeing), it is still not very adequate when used as a single resource. Such an approach can be compared to only giving students the information about their educational options, but then not including the necessary appraisal, guidance or support in the follow-up which together make up counselling in the fullest sense. This, in turn, is consistent with the notion that guidance that is really effective is comprised of a range of services addressing the different aspects of the students' development.

ASCA National Model highlights that the school counseling core curriculum is one of the school counseling components that should be delivered to students in a systematic manner and include career awareness and exploration (American School Counselor Association, 2019). According to research, only a very small proportion of children's knowledge about occupations comes from the school environment at present, which means the latter should be offering a more structured delivery of career information and guidance to children (Rosvall & Ledman, 2025).

Implications for Educational Policy and Practice

The findings have deeply touched on the issue of the direction in which educational policy should be taken in Azad Jammu and Kashmir specifically its rural areas like Tehsil Nakyal. It is evident that continuing the present scenario in which counseling services are hardly existing, and when available, they are primarily provided by the teachers who are not at all trained, will only be a

glass ceiling to comprehensive school counseling programs. Accordingly, a study carried out in AJ&K revealed that career counseling and guidance through mentors do have a strong bearing on the career decisions of the youth and hence the provision of quality counseling should also be considered along with the other areas of student development (Summera & Yasmin, 2023).

Education Policy 2023, 2040 of the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (2023) is a source for reform initiatives, which points out the importance of teacher training and improvement in the quality of education. National Education Policy Framework (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, 2018) also stresses quality education and skill development among its goals which are instrumental in making all children reach their full potential. In line with these, counseling positions should be created at the elementary school level, counselor education programs that specialize in early childhood and elementary counseling should be developed, and systematic frameworks for delivering developmentally appropriate appraisal, placement, referral, and remedial services should be created.

Conclusions

The main goal of this study was to investigate career counseling services in top-notch schools in Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K.

Appraisal Services

In general, students were mostly of the view that appraisal services were hardly ever provided to the extent necessary. Services related to advice planning and creation of occupational awareness are the most lacking, though a few strengths and interest assessments are done on an inconsistent basis.

Placement Services

Hence, it was determined that placement services constitute a major deficiency. Students, for the most part, do not get proper guidance leading to apt learning activities and peer experiences that are in line with their new found interests and abilities.

Referral Services

As far as referral services are concerned, it was the considered a very serious shortage. At present, there are no set procedures for sending students to specialized personnel when they require extra support.

Remedial Services

Remedial services have therefore been found to be drastically inadequate. Students who have differences in their way of learning and developmental needs have no access to interventions that are suitable.

Informational Services

This report finds that informational services are the only aspect of counseling that the students find to be basically at a good level. They get information about the types of education available and the paths they can take in their learning.

Overall Conclusion

This research has brought to light the fact that career counseling services in top-notch schools in Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K are largely lacking. If only minor informational services are available, full

counseling that includes appraisal, placement, referral, and remedial support services are quite absent. The fact is there is no professional counselor at the elementary level of Tehsil Nakyal, Kotli AJ&K. Not having trained counselors is a major weakness in the structure of educational support at the elementary level.

Recommendations

From the research work and its results, the following suggestions are presented:

1. **Appraisal services.** Career planning, recognizing one's self-strengths and interests, and introducing occupational awareness through appraisal services may be started at the elementary level so that students could be equipped with a basic self-awareness.
2. **Placement services.** Placement services can be set up so that students are assisted in finding the right learning activities and peer experiences that are in sync with their developing skills and interests.
3. **Referral services.** Referral mechanisms may be established to connect students requiring specialized assistance with appropriate professional support personnel.
4. **Remedial services.** Remedial services may be developed to support students with learning differences, developmental needs, and foundational skill development.
5. **Informational services.** While informational services represent an existing strength, these may be enhanced and integrated with other counseling services for comprehensive student support.
6. **Professional counselor appointment.** A trained career counselor may be appointed at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal to provide proper guidance to students regarding foundational career awareness and future educational choices.

Implications for Practice

For Teachers

Teachers may keep giving students informational support about educational opportunities and learning pathways. Teachers know that their counseling capabilities are limited and they support the idea of having professional counselors in their elementary schools. Teachers intervene by getting trained in workshops and seminars that introduce them to the basics of child development and early guidance so that they can better equip graduate their roles in supporting students.

For Administrators

Aligning with the key factor that professional counseling positions at the elementary level in Tehsil Nakyal and adjacent areas should be a priority, administrators place a great emphasis on this. Because appraisal, placement, referral, and remedial services have been found to lack, administrators work out systematic programs to rectify those loopholes. While working on developing comprehensive counseling structures suitable for elementary students, administrators also improve informational services.

For Curriculum Developers

Teacher education programs are restructured by the curriculum developers to allow coverage of child development basics, early guidance, and counseling awareness. Despite the fact that teachers are not to be professional counselors, they still need to have some level of knowledge to identify

student needs and to know when and where to make referrals. Curriculums for professional counselor training programs are formulated or updated to equip personnel for school-based counseling roles in the elementary department.

For Policymakers

There should be a regulation by policymakers to require professional counselor positions in elementary schools in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, including rural areas such as Tehsil Nakyal. The policy frameworks specify the competencies of counselors, their duties, and elementary-level responsibilities, in line with international standards of counseling for early childhood and elementary levels. Changes in regulations pursue the development of funding channels, which help the recruitment, training, and continuous professional development of counselors.

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