

Gender Differences in Guidance Needs of Senior Secondary School Adolescents of Imphal District

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ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken to assess the guidance needs of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts, Manipur across gender. Out of the total 60 schools situated in both districts viz. Imphal East and Imphal West, 30 schools were randomly drawn for the study. Further, from the list of randomly drawn schools, 25 % of the total adolescents studying in Class XI were randomly selected making a total of 651 respondents (272 boys and 379 girls). Self-structured performa and Guidance Needs Inventory by Grewal were used for the present study. Results revealed that boys had highest need for guidance in physical and educational domain. In contrast, girls exhibited highest need for guidance in vocational domain and later in educational domain. Girls were found to have significantly less need for psychological guidance than boys. Psychological guidance needs of respondents were found to be significantly dependent on gender.

INTRODUCTION

Guidance is defined as everything adults do and say, either directly or indirectly, to influence an individual's behaviour. More precisely, guidance is the process of helping a person develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and of his role in the world of work, to test this concept with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society (National Vocational Guidance Association). Guidance is essential for everybody at every stage of life but during adolescence in particular since adolescence is the period of transition from a child to an adult on whose shoulders lies the responsibility of fortifying the society and taking the nation to new heights. This transition thus, entails abandoning those special prerogatives, world views, insights and pleasures that are defined by the culture as 'childish' and substituting them with the rights, responsibilities, outlooks, and satisfactions that are suitable for culturally defined 'adult'. While many parents maintain the traditional parental duties of strictness-supervision, there is a need to recognize the need to support children's autonomy (Way et al. 2013). In this regard, guidance by parents or elders at home, during this stage of life will help him in smooth and quick transition from childhood to adulthood with minimum psychological damage.

In the 21st century that is in the era of technological revolution, there has been unprecedented growth of information of all sorts – censored

and uncensored. It's easy and unchecked accessibility among X generation adolescents through Internet and print media has profoundly influenced their perception, goals of life and henceforth their personality. Migration and Urbanisation has further worsened the situation. It has presented new challenges viz. break up of joint families, emergence of dual income and distant relationship families, disintegration of families wherein parents have limited time, energy and knowledge to guide today's adolescents who represent a generation of energetic, highly ambitious and brilliant individuals. Adolescence is a turbulent period with conflicts and mood swings; with the basic character of not being able to share feelings with adults and an impulse to experience adventure (Santrock 2012). As a result, in the absence of proper guidance, they find it difficult to adjust themselves in this highly dynamic and competitive world and even sometimes succumb to the environmental pressure. This is quite evident from the increasing number of reported incidences of juvenile delinquency, suicide, murder, depression among adolescents. In some extreme cases, adolescents are even misguided and used by terrorist groups as weapons of terror as it is very easy to influence them. It means that adolescents of today require more professional guidance in addition to the general guidance provided to them by the parents and teachers. Manipur represents a state which has been shaken by such dramatic revolutionary changes. It is affecting the life of ev-

ery native but its impact on adolescents is a matter of great concern since the future of Manipur and ultimately our nation lies in their hands.

It is a well established fact that the societal changes influence an individual or society with variation across socio-demographic as well as socio-economic characteristics. Gender is one of such socio-demographic characteristic which has profoundly influenced the attitudes and personality of adolescents differently. A study by Zimmermann and Iwanski (2014) reported gender differences to be prevalent in emotion regulation strategies among adolescents. Eyo et al. (2010) found significant differences between attitude of male and female students in rural and urban schools towards guidance and counselling services. Singh et al. (2013) accounted girls to be more socially adequate and boys to be more socially adjusted; however, gender differences were not observed in emotional maturity of adolescents in the same study. However, a study by Athanimath and Yenagi (2011) reported non-significant gender differences among adolescents on social maturity. These researches support the fact that gender differences do exist in different aspect of development of adolescents. In this regard, the assumption that guidance needs of adolescents may vary according to their gender, pose an interesting research query.

Therefore, in the light of the above reflections the present study was designed with the objective to assess if guidance needs of senior secondary adolescents varies with gender hypothesizing that there is no significant difference in guidance needs among senior school adolescents of Imphal district across gender.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The list of Higher Secondary Schools located in Imphal East and Imphal West was procured from the Department of Education, Manipur. From the list comprising of 60 schools, fifty percent (50%) of the schools located in Imphal East and Imphal West were drawn randomly for the proposed study. From the list of randomly drawn schools, twenty-five percent (25 %) of the Class XI adolescents were selected randomly for the research study making a total of 651 respondents (272 boys and 379 girls).

Tools

Self-structured performa was employed to study the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Guidance Needs Inventory developed by Grewal (1982) was administered to identify the guidance needs of the respondents. It is an instrument developed to identify the type and strength of guidance needs of secondary school students in the five areas, namely, (i) Physical, (ii) Social, (iii) Psychological, (iv) Educational and (v) Vocational. The inventory consists of 65 items. All the 65 items are in the form of positive statements. The test-retest reliability of GNI was estimated to be 0.82. The response options available for the items are: Highly True, Mostly True, Quite true, Least True and Not True which are assigned scores of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The test was administered individually to all respondents in classroom setting. After administration of tests, answer sheets were scored and raw scores calculated. Mean values, S.D and Average scores were calculated. Z-test was done to see if differences exist between the mean score of boys and girls and Chi-square test done to find out if guidance needs is independent of gender.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequency and percentage distribution of adolescents on guidance needs across gender is presented in Figure 1. It is evident from the table that majority (72.43 %) of the boys as well as girls (71.24 %) had extreme need for physical guidance and only 0.74 % of boys and 0.53 % of girls reported to have least need for it.

Similar was the case in the area of social guidance. It was noticed that majority (56.25 %) of the boys and girls (51.98 %) had extreme need for social guidance followed by having moderate need for it (40.44 % and 44.85 % respectively). Only 3.31 % of the boys and 3.17 % of the girls reported least need for social guidance.

Under the domain of psychological guidance, the picture obtained is bit different. It was noticed that 47.06 % of boys had extreme need and almost equivalent, that is, 43.75% had moderate need for psychological guidance. Where-

as, 35.09% of girls had extreme need and 53.56 % had moderate need of psychological guidance. Only 9.19% of boys and 11.35% of girls had least need for psychological guidance.

Interestingly, just like physical guidance, majority (74.63%) of the boys and (75.73 %) girls had extreme need for educational. Furthermore, only 2.21% of boys and 0.53 % of girls were reported to be have least need for educational guidance.

Need of guidance in vocational domain showed a similar trend as in educational domain. 72.79% of boys and 82.06% of girls exhibited extreme need for guidance in vocational domain and 25.74% and 17.15% reported moderate need for guidance in this area. However, 1.47% of boys and 0.79% of girls were found to report least need for guidance in this area.

Table 1 represents average score and ranking of guidance needs in various domains across gender. It is evident from the table that boys felt the highest need for guidance in physical and educational domain followed by that in vocational domain and least need for it in psychological domain.

However, among girls it was observed that the highest need for guidance was exhibited in the area of vocational domain and then in educational domain and later in physical domain. Just like boys, girls also required least need for guidance in psychological domain. A study by Kaur (2012) reported girls to have better social adjustment and school adjustment than boys. Consequently, it can be assumed that boys are in a greater need for social and educational guidance.

If seen compositely, irrespective of the gender, the respondents' were seen to have more need for vocational guidance followed by educational guidance and then physical guidance. A probable reason for this finding is the fact that adolescents of today desire to have an iden-

tity and highly paid or glamorous career at much early age and for this they need guidance in education and the associated varied vocations. The study also reported adolescents were in least need of psychological guidance. It appears that the psychological guidance required at this stage of life is accomplished through peers as Zurko (2011) proved that intimacy and support during adolescence is derived mostly from friend circle.

A close perusal of the Table 2 clearly shows that respondents' need for guidance in psychological domain varied significantly across gender. Girls were found to have less need for psychological guidance than boys ($z=3.50, p<0.05$). Nevertheless, in other areas of guidance viz. physical, social, educational and vocational area differences in mean scores across gender were found to be non-significant.

Table 3: Chi-square value of independence of guidance needs and gender

Areas of guidance needs	Chi-square value
Physical	0.11
Social	1.26
Psychological	9.44*
Educational	0.10
Vocational	4.23

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 clearly elucidates that psychological guidance needs of adolescents varies significantly with gender (9.44*). The study reported that boys significantly need more psychological guidance than girls. It can be noted that guidance needs in psychological domain encompasses aspects such as overcoming conflicts that arise in the mind, developing self confidence, becoming bold, keeping normal relationships with the opposite sex etc. The present finding revealed that boys find these aspects to be comparatively more difficult than girls and hence boys are in dire need of psychological guidance.

Table 1: Average score and ranking of areas of guidance needs of the respondent across gender

Areas of guidance needs	Boys ($n_1=272$)		Girls ($n_2=379$)		Total ($n=651$)	
	Avg. score	Rank	Avg. score	Rank	Avg. score	Rank
Physical	2.72	I	2.71	III	2.71	III
Social	2.53	III	2.49	IV	2.51	IV
Psychological	2.37	IV	2.24	V	2.30	V
Educational	2.72	I	2.75	II	2.74	II
Vocational	2.71	II	2.81	I	2.77	I

Table 2: Mean and SD of guidance need scores of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts across gender

Areas of guidance needs	Boys ($n_1=272$)		Girls ($n_2=379$)		Z calculated
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Physical	10.03	5.88	10.73	5.7	1.56
Social	20.05	9.49	20.69	9.34	0.85
Psychological	19.63	9.41	22.24	9.39	3.50*
Educational	19.65	12.24	19.04	10.94	0.66
Vocational	9.22	5.9	8.65	4.94	1.30

*significant at 0.05 level

It can also be concluded from the table that physical guidance, social guidance, educational guidance and vocational guidance needs were independent of influence of gender.

CONCLUSION

Findings of the present study revealed that boys had highest need for guidance in physical and educational domain. In contrast, girls exhibited highest need for guidance in vocational domain and later in educational domain. Girls were found to have significantly less need for psychological guidance than boys. Psychological guidance needs of respondents were found to be significantly dependent on gender. However, in spite of the fact that gender difference is inevitable in any aspect of development, it can be compensated through well-planned curriculum and by providing conducive environment and professional guidance that will cater to the ever increasing guidance needs of adolescents. It may be because of the inborn instinct in the fairer sex for self actualization and intuitive thinking that led to a lesser need for such guidance, nevertheless irrespective of the sex, young adolescents should be provided the cordial environment so that they become responsible adults and thus ensuring a secure future for the nation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Guidance centres can be established in schools with regular visits from counsellors and human development experts to deal with the problems of adolescents.
2. Parents and teachers need to be sensitised regarding the changing needs of adoles-

cents and ensure that gender bias does not exist in both home and school environment.

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