



“शिक्षा मानव को बन्धनों से मुक्त करती है और आज के युग में तो यह लोकतंत्र की भावना का आधार भी है। जन्म तथा अन्य कारणों से उत्पन्न जाति एवं वर्गगत विषमताओं को दूर करते हुए मनुष्य को इन सबसे ऊपर उठाती है।”

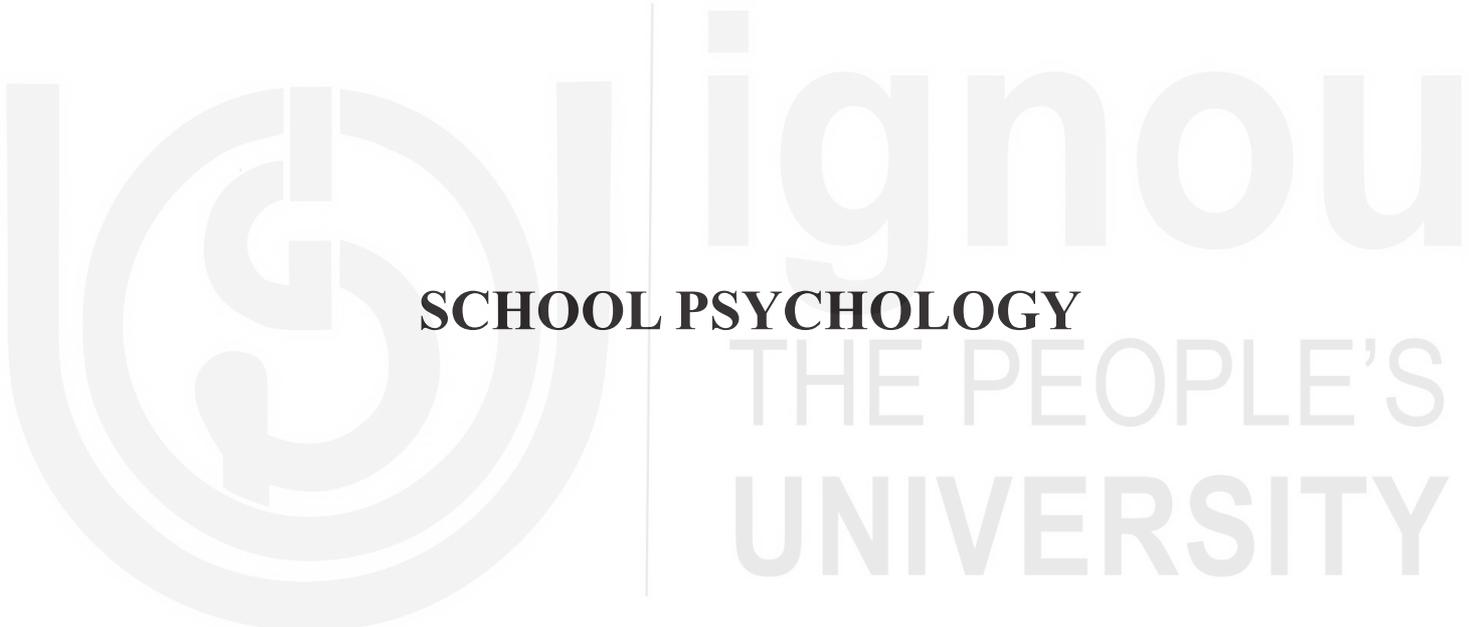
— इन्दिरा गांधी



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“Education is a liberating force, and in our age it is also a democratising force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances.”

— Indira Gandhi



SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

**School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University**

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School Psychology: How to proceed in the course?

The course on School Psychology (BPCS-184) is a skill enhancement course offered under Bachelor's Degree Programme of IGNOU. The course is of 04 Credits. The self-learning material is divided into four blocks. Each of these blocks represent a specific theme which is discussed in one to three units. The units are arranged in a logical sequence so as to cover the main aspects of each theme. Each unit contains a brief introduction in the beginning and a list of references and further readings, as well as, web resources at the end. The links for web resources have been mentioned for additional information on various topics. You are advised to read the Course Introduction carefully, in order to know about the rationale and content of the course you have offered to read.

You have in your hands, all the four blocks and nine units of this course. Before proceeding to read the units, you are advised to go through instructions about how to read the course material. Given below is the explanation of the organization and sequencing of the unit. We will tell you what is contained in various sections of a unit, and you should go about completing different tasks involved while reading the course material.

Organization and Sequencing of a Unit

The unit starts with,

- 1.0 Learning Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Section (Theme of the section)
- 1.2.1 Subsection of 1

.....

Check your progress

- 1.3 Section (Theme of the section)
- 1.3.1 Subsection of 2

.....

Check your progress

The numbering and length of each section and subsections may vary from one unit to the other unit, depending upon the depth of information in each unit. The last three sections in each unit with the following headings are also numbered. They are as follows,

- Review Questions
- References & Further Reading
- Web Resources

As the scheme suggests, each unit is divided into sections for easy reading and better comprehension. Each section is indicated by **BOLD CAPITALS** and each sub-section by a **relatively smaller but bold typeface**. Divisions within the sub-sections are in **relatively smaller bold typeface** so as to make it easy for you to understand.

Let us now discuss each section of a unit.

Learning Objectives

We begin each unit with the section Learning Objectives. It tells you briefly what we expect from you once you complete working on the unit.

Introduction

In the section Introduction, we specify,

- a) The relationship of the present unit to the previous unit (if there is a previous unit).
- b) The theme of the present unit
- c) The order of presentation of all the sections in the unit from Introduction to Summary

Summary

This section of each unit under the heading Summary, encapsulates the whole unit for the purpose of ready reference and recapitulation.

Box

Sometimes certain topics may deal with abstract ideas and related concepts, as well as some case studies. Thus, it becomes necessary to explain these related concepts in a separate enclosure, which is called Box, in our units. This is added information which is necessary to comprehend the main text. These boxes may include (i) explanatory notes regarding concepts, (ii) information about main works of scientists/psychologists who have contributed to a particular topic, (iii) certain case-studies that are related to the concepts being discussed, (iv) examples, etc.

Illustration

There are illustrations in the units in the form of pictures, figures, diagrams and images. The main purpose of these illustrations is to make the study comprehensive and interesting.

Check Your Progress

We have given self-check exercises under the caption Check Your Progress in between the main sections. To answer the Check Your Progress questions, you should,

- a) Write your answers using the space given below each question
- b) Label the diagrams in the space provided (if asked).

You will be tempted to have a glance of the main text as soon as you come across an exercise. But we do hope that you will resist this temptation and turn to the main text only after completing the answers.

You should read each unit and note the important points in the margin provided in the course material. This will help in your study. It will also help you to answer the self-check exercises and the assignment questions, as well as help in revising your course before writing your Term End Examination.

Key Words

Each unit has key words at the end of the unit, to explain the basic ideas, technical terms and difficult words.

References & Further Reading

We have given a list of references at the end of each unit. This is a list of books and articles used by the course writers to prepare the units. This reflects that your course material is based on a wide spectrum of literature available on a particular theme, related to your course. This also informs you of the wide literature available in the particular area of study. If interested in widening your knowledge, you may look for the mentioned references. Each reference mentions the name of the author, year of publication, title of the book/article, name of publisher and place of publication.

Further readings help you to increase your level of understanding of a particular theme in each unit, though it is not a compulsory reading.

Web Resources

We have given a list of online references, on various topics, in each unit after References and Further Reading section. Apart from the text material, if you are interested in learning more about the topic, then you may access the website as mentioned, for a particular topic.

Review Questions

Besides Check Your Progress, we have given Review Questions after summary section in each unit. You may practice these questions which will help you in answering assignments and Term End Examination Question Paper, though the pattern and style of questions asked may not be similar.

Audio and Video Aids

Some Units have been selected for the audio and video programmes to supplement the printed material. This will help you to understand the units with greater clarity. The related audio and videos are uploaded on www.ignou.ac.in/egyankosh.

Apart from this, you may also access IGNOU's FM radio channel, Gyanvani (105.6 FM) which is available across many cities in India, for regular programmes, related to themes on Psychology. You can listen to the live discussions by faculty and experts on the topic of the day and interact with them through telephone, email, and through chat mode.

You may also watch Gyandarshan TV channel (free to air educational channel), for programmes related to topics on Psychology. The schedule of Gyanvani and Gyandarshan is displayed on www.ignou.ac.in. The radio and TV channels may also be accessed on Gyandhara, webcast facility for Gyanvani and Gyandarshan, provided by the University.

Assignments

There are a set of assignments for the whole course uploaded on [www.ignou.ac.in/downloads/assignments/BA_CBCS/Ability / Skill Enhancement Courses](http://www.ignou.ac.in/downloads/assignments/BA_CBCS/Ability_Skill_Enhancement_Courses). You need to check the course code and title of the course carefully, before downloading the assignment. These are Tutor Marked Assignments, which are to be submitted to the respective Study Centre after completion. These assignments will be evaluated by academic counsellor from your Study Centre. Ensure that you complete all your assignments because the grades that you get in each of these assignments are included in the final evaluation of your degree (30% weightage). Before answering the assignments, read all the units carefully. While working on the assignments, kindly ensure the following points,

- 1) Clearly write your enrollment number.

- 2) Answer them in your handwriting and in your own words.
- 3) Write clearly and neatly so that it is easy to read your answers.
- 4) Leave margins on one side of your answer-sheets so that evaluator may write his/ her comments on your performance.
- 5) You will submit the assignments at your Study Centre on or before the date mentioned as per the admission cycle. Kindly check the dates from www.ignou.ac.in or your Regional Centre website.

Term End Examination

After reading and understanding the course material, as well as referring to the audio and video programmes, you will be writing the Term End Examination (TEE) for the course. TEE carries 70% weightage. Kindly consider the following points while answering for TEE.

- 1) Questions should be replied in one's own words and should be focused.
- 2) Answer questions keeping in mind the word limit.

Preparation of Course Material

The syllabus of course material BPCS-184 is designed by an Expert Committee (see page 2 of this course) and prepared by Course Preparation Team which comprises the author(s) of units, content editor(s), language editor, and the course coordinator. The expert committee selected the themes and sub-themes of the blocks and units, keeping in view the prescribed syllabi of UGC (CBCS model). The authors of units have provided their expertise in elaborating them in the form of the main text of each unit. The content editor has carefully examined the course contents and has made an attempt to make the material clear and comprehensible.

For any query or feedback related to the course, you may contact the Course Coordinator at,

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COURSE INTRODUCTION: SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

School Psychology is a Skill Enhancement Course offered in Bachelor's Degree Programme. It will introduce you to a specialized field of Psychology, which focuses on children, adolescents, schooling process and families. It is a branch of psychology that is rooted in areas like clinical psychology, counselling psychology educational psychology and related to inclusive education and policy making. It addresses many concerns from the child's or caregiver's or the teacher's perspective, like social or interpersonal problems, disabilities and disorders that affect learning or behaviour, and other challenging concerns during the growing-up years like, substance use and delinquency.

The role of a school psychologist is to promote well-being of the child and to foster an optimum teaching-learning experience. The main functions of a school psychologist are assessment, diagnosis, intervention, promotion of social and emotional functioning, amidst cultural diversity of children and adolescents. However, the skills required by a school psychologist are not only related to assessment, prevention and intervention, but also include consultation with the teachers, parents, and administrators and other stake holders. Now let us look at a brief overview of the blocks and units of the course.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

There are four blocks in this course. Block 1 introduces you to the field of School Psychology. It discusses about the field of School Psychology, its emergence as a separate discipline, its relevance and functions of a school psychologist. Block 2 explains the developmental factors in children and adolescents and major developmental theories are introduced. Block 3 focusses on the problem behaviour of children and adolescents. Internalising and externalizing problems in children and adolescents as well as children with special needs are discussed in detail. Therapeutic interventions for children and adolescents as well as child rights are highlighted in Block 4.

Block 1 introduces you to the field of School Psychology. This block will give you an idea about what will follow in other blocks as well. It comprises of one Unit. Unit 1 describes about the emergence of School Psychology, as a separate discipline. Its relationship with other disciplines like clinical psychology and educational psychology is explained. It will further highlight the present status and future trends for school psychology. Lastly, the role and functions of a school psychologist are also discussed.

Block 2 describes the developmental factors in children and adolescents. This block constitutes of two units. Unit 2 introduces the principles of human development. It discusses the issues and debates related to developmental psychology. Lastly, it explains the importance of both heredity and environmental factors in human development. Major developmental theories are explained in Unit 3. Theories related to the cognitive domain like, *Piaget*, *Vygotsky*, *Bruner* and *Skinner's* and *Chomsky's* position on language development are discussed. *Erikson's* psychosocial theory and *Kohlberg's* moral development theory is also explained. The unit also highlights the ecological system theory of *Bronfrenbrenner* and Ecological Model of *Durganand Sinha*. Theories are also critically evaluated.

Block 3 introduces you to the problem behaviours in children and adolescents. This block constitutes of three units (Unit 4, Unit 5, and Unit 6). Unit 4 discusses the concerns of children with special needs. Early intervention and assessment of specific learning disability and intellectual disability are discussed. Various schemes related to gifted children as well as the role of school psychologist in special education is put forward. Unit 5 describes the internalizing problems in children and adolescents like depression, anxiety, social withdrawal, body image and eating disorders, and somatic problems. Unit 6 gives an overview of the externalizing problems of children and adolescents. Such problems include oppositional-defiant disorder, conduct disorder, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and substance use disorder. Other problems like kleptomania, pyromania and truancy are also discussed in the unit.

Block 4 consists of three units (Unit 7, Unit 8 & Unit 9). Unit 7 gives a description of the importance of referrals and counselling for problem behaviours in children and adolescents. Techniques to use art and play therapy with examples are highlighted in the unit. Unit 8 introduces to therapeutic interventions for children. The main therapies explained with examples are cognitive therapy, cognitive-behaviour therapy, rational-emotive behaviour therapy, and social skills training. Psychoeducational programs and strengths-based counselling for resilience building is highlighted in the unit. The last Unit (Unit 9) will introduce you to the status of child rights in India, right to survival and sustainable development goals, as well as right to protection and participation is highlighted. You will also be introduced to the emergence and significance of child helpline in India.



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BLOCK 1

Introduction to School Psychology

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UNIT 1 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: AN OVERVIEW*

Structure

- 1.0 Learning Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Defining School Psychology
- 1.3 Need and Relevance of School Psychology
- 1.4 Historical Overview and Current Trends
- 1.5 Future of School Psychology in India
- 1.6 Roles and Functions of a School Psychologist
- 1.7 Summary
- 1.8 Keywords
- 1.9 Review Questions
- 1.10 References and Further Reading
- 1.11 Web Resources

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Differentiate school psychology from other allied fields of psychology;
- Discuss the urgency to professionalize school psychology in India;
- Gain insight into the historical antecedents that led to the development of school psychology as a distinct field of study;
- Explain the current status of school psychology in India and how it can lead to future trends in the field of study; and
- Acquire knowledge on the wide array of roles that belong to the repertoire of a school psychologist.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Within India, the boundaries between school psychology, counselling psychology, clinical psychology, educational psychology and child psychology have been very blurry. There are distinct features that each field has, that allow us to differentiate between these branches of psychology. Much before, thought was laid on professionalization of school psychology in India, jobs for school counsellors started to emerge in private schools. The school counsellors were employed for students of primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary sections in Indian schools, which has now become a mandatory condition for schools affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

O. APPOINTMENT OF HEALTH WELLNESS TEACHERS Rule 53.5: (i) Every secondary and senior secondary school shall appoint a person on full time U/ basis for performing the duties of a Health Wellness teacher having the following ~ qualification: --",,1- ,Je I • Graduate/Post Graduate in psychology. OR Post Graduate in Child Development. OR Graduate/Post

* Dr. Dhvani Patel, Former Faculty, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara

Graduate with Diploma in Career Guidance and Counselling. (ii) Schools having enrolment of less than 300 students in classes from IX to XII can appoint a counsellor on part-time basis. (iii) Schools which are already affiliated shall appoint a Health Wellness teacher as mentioned at sub clause 1 and 2 above within two years from the date this Rule comes into force. (CBSE/AFF/Circular /2014/ 67&5195)

The school counsellors were traditionally directed to cater to the needs of children who belong to 'at-risk' population, and students with special needs. While working toward students' mental health concerns, the school counsellor is typically engaged in individual and group sessions and guidance services. Today, the term 'school psychologist' includes the titles of 'counsellor' and 'school counsellor', all meaning the same. The difference however, is in the wide array of roles that are played by a school psychologist, but whether these roles are enacted or not, will depend on the professional training that is received by the 'school psychologist'. Professionalizing of school psychology discipline is still in its infancy stage in India with limited institutes attempting to offer professional course in this field.

In this Unit, we will discuss the field of school psychology and provide an overview of past, present and future of school psychology in India. Issues concerning the scope of this field and the specific roles enacted by school psychologists will also be addressed in the later part of the Unit.

1.2 DEFINING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

School Psychology is similar to educational psychology for both emphasize on the learning environment of the child and work towards making the academic journey of school children a fruitful process. School psychologists also require adequate knowledge on developmental and childhood disorders, bringing them closer to clinical psychologists' work profile. They also address the mental health concerns of school children. Student centric and individual sessions that are typically carried out by a school psychologist, require the skills of a counselling psychologist. Having said that, school psychologists are also required to plan interventions and preventive programs, use consultation with school teachers as well as parents and also employ action research to address the various mental health concerns. The American Psychological Association defines school psychology as,

School Psychology is a general practice and health service provider specialty of professional psychology that is concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process. The basic education and training of school psychologists prepares them to provide a range of psychological assessment, intervention, prevention, health promotion, and program development and evaluation services with a special focus on the developmental processes of children and youth within the context of schools, families, and other systems.

International School Psychology Association defines 'the term school psychology is used in a general form to refer to professionals prepared in psychology and education and who are recognized as specialists in the provision of psychological services to children and youth within the contexts of schools, families, and other settings that impact their growth and development'.

Thus, it may be said that school psychology encompasses important domains of learning, behaviour, and mental health and aims to enable children and adolescents to succeed academically, socially, behaviourally and emotionally.

1.3 NEED AND RELEVANCE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

According to 2011 census, India has 37.24 Crore (overall population of 121.1 cr) in the age - group of 0-14 years which constitutes 30.76% of the total population (Children in India 2018, A Statistical Appraisal). There are several government initiatives that aim at fulfilling the educational needs of children in this country, like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2000) and Right to Education (2010), thus ensuring a greater enrolment of students and a lower rate of school dropouts. The school therefore, works as an attractive community base to be able to reach out to a large number of children. A large community base such as the school, could also be beneficial for carrying out mental health programs.

The last few decades have seen a steep rise in the interest that is generated towards psychology courses. More schools have also started offering psychology at the higher secondary level. In college courses however, there has been a pattern in subject selection that remains unchanged for decades. Majority of the students opting for psychology major, have an inclination towards the specialized field of clinical psychology. The jobs of a school counsellor is one of the most visible options for a psychology fresher. Often students who have been trained in clinical or counselling psychology, apply for jobs in the school set up, as school counsellors, or school psychologists. This situation calls out for changes to be brought about in the higher education curriculum, emphasizing on the need to introduce specialization courses in school psychology to better prepare students in their role as school counsellors.

Box 1.1: Suicide facts and figures in India

- India has one of the highest rate of suicides in the age group of 15-29 years (Lancet Medical Journal).
- According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 10,159 student suicides in 2018, which was an increase from 9,905 in 2017.
- State-wise records, according to NCRB indicates that Maharashtra tops in the student suicides with 1,448 suicides in 2018, followed by Tamil Nadu (953) and Madhya Pradesh (862)
- Parental pressure, exam related stress and peer pressure are some of the commonly identified triggers to student suicides in India.

The information in Box 1.1 on suicide, portrays a grim picture of the Indian youth. Experts from the field of Sociology and Psychology state a number of possible reasons for the rise in student suicides in India over the years. Higher academic stress, failure in relationships, inadequate coping mechanisms, and lack of social support are some of the prominent indices that work as precipitating factors to student suicides. Students often are unable to find avenues for addressing their growing anxiety and stress. With this growing rate of student suicides year after year, there is an urgent need to address the mental health concerns of students. However, here are discrepancies evidenced in schools hiring school psychologists. Many schools hire paraprofessionals, who have merely obtained a diploma degree in mental health services and have very limited knowledge about psychology. Schools across the country therefore, need to have a permanent position of school psychologists within their organizational structure, a definite set of roles

and responsibilities assigned to that position, and a required set of minimum qualifications (being a specialised area).

Box 1.2 Central Board of Secondary Examination (CBSE) offers psychological counselling to exam weary students

CBSE every year has a committee of experts in the field of mental health: counsellors and special educators from India and abroad, who offer online counselling services (counselling.cebse@gmail.com) to students and parents of board classes. This service is primarily offered before and during the board exam months, starting from February till end of April. A toll free number is also provided that provides tele-counselling services to students and their parents. The services were also initiated by the Board during the lockdown period in 2020 when the exams were rescheduled or cancelled, to address the concerns faced by students and their families. The Psychological Helpline (1800-11-8004) is now also inclusive of two new features: Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) and Live Counselling.

The Indian education system is in a state of transition, with modifications being planned in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP, 2020). While drastic changes are predicted in curriculum development, NEP (2020) will also function as a catalyst to the on - going movement in inclusive education in Indian schools. The Policy also emphasizes on effective training of teachers, which would positively impact the school children and comparatively reduce the burden of school psychologists. One of the key highlights of NEP 2020 is its emphasis on health check-ups that not only include the physical health of the child, but also check for his/her psychological well-being. While NEP 2020 is still in its nascent stage, the humongous task of assessing school children's mental health and well-being in India is in itself commendable.

In the present times, there have been many changes (E.g., in the COVID-19 situation) that have greatly impacted the education sector, forcing all the schools and colleges to go for online teaching and learning. New set of issues are likely to arise owing to the forced home schooling for almost a whole academic year for the children. Along with the school teachers, the school psychologists will have to be more aware for new variants of behavioural patterns in students that are likely to emerge post COVID-19 when the schools resume to offline schooling. Also, as we come to rely more heavily on the online platform for service delivery, accessibility to mental health services will have a new experience. The success of online counselling and/or therapy services can help break the barriers to stigma, that prevented many students to approach the school counsellors during the school hours.

The establishment of a discipline is also dependent upon the developing status of the country. The specialized field of school psychology is very well established in the Western countries, with well-structured training programs, specialized academic courses and licence to practice. In India, the issue of licensing remains pending for all the other specializations of psychology, except clinical psychology. Conscious efforts need to be made in this direction to ensure the development of appropriate training standards for the school psychologist. Professionalizing of school psychology as a discipline in India hence becomes an agenda that needs to be addressed on a priority basis.

There is thus, an urgent need for professionalizing school psychology as an academic discipline, owing to these stated factors (1) the alarming rate of student

suicides in India, (2) the increasing demands that are likely to be made on provision of mental health services after implementation of NEP 2020, (3) the emerging new role of the school psychologists as online therapists/ counsellors in the present times and (4) the professional overlaps among psychology specializations that is further creating more confusion to the image of a school psychologist.

Check Your Progress 1

Answer the following in one word or one sentence.

1) Name any one factor that increasingly leads to student suicides in India.

.....
.....
.....

2) Mention one key feature of NEP 2020 that highlights on mental health status of school children.

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3) Give one point of difference between developed countries and developing countries in the establishment of school psychology as a distinct field.

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4) What is the new role of a school psychologist in the present times?

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5) Which is the most opted specialization among the psychology majors' students?

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.....

1.4 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND CURRENT TRENDS

School Psychology as a field has significant overlaps with the specialized fields of educational psychology, clinical psychology, counselling psychology, community psychology, and developmental psychology. The traditional role of a school psychologist has more often been restricted to the psychometric model, where assessment was the key feature of the profession. Around two decades back, school psychologists in India were seen as experts in psychological testing and guidance. The roles outlined were limited in the school setting and school psychologists

often reported of (1) not having role clarity, (2) of being handed over tasks that did not fall under their area of expertise, (3) of being misunderstood in their roles as psychologists or counsellors, (4) of facing unrealistic expectations from parents and teachers, and (5) of not enjoying the status similar to that of a clinical psychologist. Over the years, as school psychology as a field evolved, a lot many additional features have been added to this profession that makes it distinct from the more commonly overlapping fields of clinical and counselling psychology. The overlaps of the field is owing to the fact that before school psychology started off as a distinct field, it was the counselling and clinical psychologists who worked in the school setting. The trend has pretty much remained the same across schools, since we do not have many professional courses that offer specialized training in school psychology.

At present in India, very few universities have started to offer specialized training in School Psychology, For instance, there are two universities that offer postgraduate programs (The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and GD Goenka University, Gurugram) in school psychology and a diploma course on school psychology is being offered by Pune University. Indira Gandhi National Open University has been offering a course on School Psychology in its undergraduate programme since 2010.

Developed countries offer specialized courses in school psychology at the university level and the training and practice of the students is carried out together with some form of regulatory committee. In the United States, we have National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 16 of School Psychology, as regulatory committees that are looking after the ethics and standards of practice of school psychologists. In India, The Indian School Psychology Association (InSPA) was formed in the year 2009 under the guidance of Prof. B. Mukhopadhyay and has successfully completed the first decennial journey (2009-2019). The role of In SPA is significant in furthering the discipline of school psychology in India. The organization has not only brought about experts in this field together to discuss pertinent issues related to school mental health, the annual conferences have served as platforms for showcasing the research carried out at school level. A number of workshops organized by inviting international speakers has also worked in favour for the development of the right mind-set for the current school psychologists.

The discipline of school psychology is considered well established when measured against six indices: 1) specialised graduate training programs in school psychology, 2) specialised doctorate programs in school psychology, 3) hiring qualified professionals as school psychologists, 4) licensed practice, 5) forming of professional associations, and 6) academic journals that address the issues of this field. In India, we have already met conditions (1), (3) and (4), though there are schools that are hiring paraprofessionals or experts in psychology who may be unable to rightfully cater to the mental health needs of school children. The country does not offer specialized doctorate degrees for the other specializations of psychology and hence, this may remain an issue that is pending for a while. Recently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) declared a UGC-CARE list in an attempt to rid the predatory journals that were common in the field of education. Establishing a journal that follows the UGC-CARE (2020) protocol is going to be a daunting task for the subject experts. However, a lot of relevant publications on school psychology have been published in the *Journal of Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, and *Psychological Studies* (Springer). The other journals of international repute are as follows, *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*

(Sage), *Psychology in the Schools* (Wiley), *School Psychology International* (Sage), *School Psychology Quarterly* (American Psychological Association), and *School Psychology Review* (Taylor & Francis).

| Box 1.3: List of some of the professional organizations for the discipline of School Psychology | |
|--|---|
| NASP | National Association of School Psychologists |
| APA | Division 16 – School Psychology, American Psychological Association |
| ISPA | International School Psychology Association |
| InSPA | Indian School Psychology Association |
| APACS | Australian Psychologists and Counsellors in School |
| CASP | Canadian Association of School Psychologists |
| APSPA | Asia Pacific School Psychology Association |

1.5 FUTURE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY IN INDIA

School psychology in India in near future has a widened scope to grow and develop. Professional organizations need to work towards the development of standardized assessment tools that can be of use to the school psychologists. India is a land of diversity and multiculturalism, and the number of official languages is as high as 22. This requires concerted efforts on part of researchers and psychometricians to devise assessment tools that are also culturally sensitive. Of greater need, is for a council of school psychology in India to be established that can develop certain rules for the professional training courses on school psychology in universities, define the ethical guidelines much needed for the progress of this field, and regulate the issuing of licenses to qualified school psychology professionals. More research needs to be encouraged for scholars in the field in order to generate knowledge about school psychology practices that are locally relevant. At present, a school psychologist typically works in the school setting. However, the future scenario can lead to creation of positions in mental health institutes, private clinics, and hospitals.

The future of school psychology should evidence a shift in perspective and become more community-oriented in addressing the schools' mental health concerns. There are certain challenges that need to be overcome. There must be an acknowledgment of the active interface of school, home and the community that collectively affect the development of the child. Along with this, more awareness needs to be created about the role and salience of school psychologists among other professionals working in the school setup. Teachers have unrealistic expectations from the school psychologists when dealing with problematic issues of school children. Teachers also often do not report issues that need immediate attention. A school psychologist is often reduced to the status of a proxy teacher since the school management and principal do not know how else to utilize the services of a school psychologist.

It has to be understood that a school psychologist can contribute maximally only through the collaborative actions of the school management, administration, teachers, parents and children. It is a combined effort of all the stakeholders involved in bringing about significant improvement in the mental health domain of school children.

Check Your Progress 2

Answer the following as true or false.

- 1) India offers specialized doctorate degrees in school psychology. (True/False)
- 2) School psychologists in India can obtain a licence to practice. (True/False)
- 3) School psychology has significant overlaps with the fields of clinical psychology, counselling psychology and educational psychology. (True/False)
- 4) Schools in India that hire school psychologists are traditionally trained in clinical or counselling psychology. (True/False)
- 5) Professionals in school psychology are often misunderstood in their roles and contribution as school psychologists. (True/False)

1.6 ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Psychology in India has more often heavily relied on the western models and techniques, for understanding and resolving the problems that are rooted locally. In case of school psychology thus, it would not be advisable to adopt the western model for roles and functions of a school psychologist in the school setting.

Indian education system faces a broad range of issues that may require a whole new perspective to address the mental health issues that are increasing by each day in the Indian schools. Given the nascent stage of school psychology in India, there is not a single acceptable model that can be followed by schools of various states. There have been evidenced discrepancies in the roles that are enacted by the school psychologists across the country. Overall, the following are the roles and functions that are expected to be carried out by a school psychologist in India.

- 1) **Direct Services** – School psychologists offer direct services to the school children by offering counselling. Problems in school, at home, academic stress and relationship issues of the youth are some of the regular issues that are addressed effectively with the help of the school psychologist's counselling services.
- 2) **Assessment** – School psychologists also carry out assessments and a part of their higher education training allows them to learn principles of test conduction and seek experience in interpreting test scores and making test reports. Owing to the skewed psychologist-student ratio, many schools prefer to have visiting consultants to provide assessment services for career planning like administration of the aptitude tests for the higher secondary students. Often, in cases where a detailed diagnosis is required, school psychologists typically refer the child's family to outside-school mental health professionals.
- 3) **Expert talks** – School Psychologists arrange for talks by experts for addressing needs of all stakeholders in a variety of ways. (1) School psychologists provide guidance in students' career choices by organizing career talks and inviting experts from varied fields to interact with students and empower students to become better decision makers. (2) Inviting experts in the field of time management and meditation, for instance, is

generally arranged by school psychologists for the board class students. (3) School psychologists as experts for training of school staff. (4) They also organize parenting sessions on topics that are relevant to parents of particular grades, for instance, parents of primary classes may be oriented about 'good touch, bad touch', or have them attend a talk by nutritionist who provides information for the right kind of diet that benefits the health of the young children and prevents childhood obesity.

- 4) **Prevention Services** – By assuming a role akin to community psychologist, the school psychologists work towards the development of primary and secondary preventive services targeted for the betterment of the school students. For example, to address the problem of bullying in school, the school psychologist can work toward a primary preventive program that could help eradicate the problem of bullying by providing for a more sensitive and conducive school environment and helping young children develop empathy. For the same issue of bullying, the school psychologist can provide for secondary preventive services that target on identifying bullies and victims at an early stage and assisting them in the initial phase of their problematic behaviours.
- 5) **Interventions** – Schools prepare children for a better life and make them job ready. Since the last two decades, a lot of emphasis is placed on helping the school children acquire the needed life skills that can enable them to lead a healthy and successful life. CBSE schools have a mandatory subject on 'life skills education' that provide the children with the necessary life skills like interpersonal skills, critical thinking, decision making, coping with stress, coping with emotions, to name a few. One of the significant roles played by a school psychologist is also that of a trained life skills instructor for the school students.
- 6) **Consultation** – School Psychology concerns itself with the psychological well-being of school children and hence focuses on the academic difficulties or the behavioural problems that the child is facing. School Psychologists also provide consultation which are indirect services where instead of directly interacting with the child, the school psychologist assist the parents and/or teachers of the child who is facing a particular problem. These consultation services are collaborative in nature since they actively involve the parents and teachers of the child in resolving an issue. For example, a girl in Grade IX is involved in a relationship with her classmate, which is a cause of concern to the family. The school psychologist can have sessions with the parents and enable them to effectively deal with their daughter on such a sensitive issue.
- 7) **Inclusive Education** – The school psychologist is actively involved in providing educational services to the children with special needs. From providing for appropriate teaching strategies, infrastructural facilities in school, and helping fellow classmates develop a healthy attitude towards children with special needs, the school psychologist also assist the parents in providing for a shadow teacher, wherever the need arises in a school setting. The school psychologist effectively engages in the assessment of children who have special needs, provides for referrals of experts outside school and helps in maintaining a student profile, to check for progress that is made by the student and to enable effective sharing of the child's background details as the child moves from one grade to the next.

The roles and functions of the school psychologist are not limited to the ones discussed above. Besides the above, school psychologists are also engaged in counselling, supervision, planning, advocacy, and sometimes in some administrative functions. According to American Psychological Association, school psychologists are prepared to intervene at the individual and system levels, and develop, implement and evaluate programs to promote positive learning environments for children and youth from diverse backgrounds. They also need to ensure equal access to effective educational and psychological services that promote health development. However, school psychologists need to follow their professional ethics, which will give credibility to the field and school psychological services. This will also help the field to grow and achieve its due status.

Check Your Progress 3

Identify the specific role of school psychology from the following examples.

- 1) Mohit has been diagnosed with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and requires a shadow teacher to assist in school.
- 2) Assisting Kushal of Grade XII Commerce Stream, to decide upon a right career choice in the field of commerce by inviting professionals from the field of commerce for active interaction and knowledge sessions.
- 3) Sharing the results of an aptitude test with Preya of Grade X, to allow her to make an informed decision on whether to go for Humanities or Science Stream.
- 4) Preetha was unable to cope up with the divorce of her parents, and she sought to get help from a school psychologist.
- 5) The school psychologist carried out a classroom activity on self-awareness with Grade 5 students.
- 6) Niyati of Grade 4 was facing problems in her math assignments. The school psychologist shared strategies with the math teacher to deal with students like her.
- 7) Developing a program to address the issue of rising suicide cases by providing mental health services to children during their vulnerable period of appearing for the board exams.

1.7 SUMMARY

Now that we have come to the end of this unit, let us recapitulate all the major points that we have learnt.

- Within India, the boundaries between school psychology, counselling psychology, clinical psychology, educational psychology and developmental psychology have been very blurry.
- Today, the term ‘school psychologist’ includes the titles of ‘counsellor’ and ‘school counsellor’, all meaning the same.
- School Psychology is similar to educational psychology for both emphasize on the learning environment of the child and work towards making the academic journey of school children, a fruitful process.

- School psychologists are also required to plan interventions and preventive programs, use consultation with school teachers, as well as parents and also employ action research to address the various mental health concerns.
- The Indian School Psychology Association (InSPA) got formed in the year 2009 under the guidance of Prof. B. Mukhopadhyay and has successfully completed the first decennial journey (2009-2019).
- A council of school psychology in India needs to be established that can develop certain rules for the professional training courses on school psychology in universities, define the ethical guidelines much needed for the progress of this field, and regulate the issuing of licenses to qualified school psychology professionals.
- Over the years, as school psychology as a field evolved, a lot of additional features have been added to this profession that make it distinct from the more commonly overlapping fields of clinical and counselling psychology.
- School psychologists offer direct services to the school children by offering counselling. School psychologists also carry out assessments and a part of their higher education training allows them to learn principles of test conduction and seek experience in interpreting test scores and making test reports.
- School psychologists provide guidance in students' career choices by organizing career talks and inviting experts from varied fields to interact with students.
- The school psychologists work towards the development of primary and secondary preventive services targeted for the betterment of the school students.
- One of the significant roles played by a school psychologist is also that of a trained life skills instructor for the school students.
- School psychologists also provide for consultation which are indirect services where instead of directly interacting with the child, the school psychologist assists the parents and/or teachers of the child who is facing a particular problem.
- The school psychologist is actively involved in providing for the educational services of the children with special needs.

1.8 KEYWORDS

School Psychology: A field that represents a group of professionals who are trained in psychological and educational services, to cater to the needs of children and youth in the contexts of schools, families and community that significantly impact their development.

Educational Psychology: A field of specialization that concerns itself with effective teaching-learning process with the help of guidance and psychological testing. Experts in this field take note of the developmental stage of the children when working to modify their learning environments.

Clinical Psychology: A field of speciality that concerns itself with the diagnosis and treatment of issues to mental health and behavioural problems.

Counselling Psychology: A field of speciality that focuses on individuals' emotional, social, educational, developmental, health-related, vocational and organizational concerns.

Primary Prevention Programs: Under this, efforts are made to prevent a mental health condition/ behavioural issue before it occurs. In other words, it means trying to address the root cause of the problem.

Secondary Prevention Programs: Under this, efforts are made to reduce the impact of the mental health condition/behavioural issue that has already taken place. Early identification of ‘at-risk’ population is crucial in this program.

1.9 REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Discuss the need and relevance of school psychology in India.
- 2) Describe the role of a school psychologist.
- 3) Explain the historical antecedents that led to the establishment of school psychology.
- 4) Discuss the current status of school psychology and the future directions of the discipline.
- 5) Define school psychology. How is it different from the other fields of psychology?

1.10 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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1.11 WEB RESOURCES

<http://www.inspa.org/>

http://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/HealthManual/HEALTH%20

MANUAL%20VOL%201.pdf

http://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Manuals/21st_Century_Skill_Handbook.pdf

<https://in.pearson.com/blogs/2020/09/the-new-education-policy-and-its-effect-on-mental-health.html>

Answers to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Higher academic stress
- 2) Regular health check-ups that include for mental health check-ups along with physical health check-ups.
- 3) License to practice
- 4) Online counselling and/or therapy
- 5) Clinical Psychology

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) False
- 2) False
- 3) True
- 4) True
- 5) True

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Inclusive Education Services
- 2) Expert Talks
- 3) Assessment
- 4) Direct Services
- 5) Intervention Services
- 6) Consultation
- 7) Prevention Services

