

IS THERE A PLACE FOR COUNSELING PROGRAMS IN TURKISH SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

There are four points that I would like to make. One, economic growth is the central goal in most countries. Two, education is increasingly keyed to economic growth and universities increasingly are the catalyst for this development. Three, the application of behavioral science research and ideas as a key to educational success. Counseling psychology is an applied behavioral science and is, therefore, an important link in this chain. And, four, what are the trends in this field that relate to educational success and ultimately, in the long run, to economic development?

Economic Growth As A Central Goal

Can you think of a country where economic growth and development is not a goal? Is not this idea embedded in the very nature of a nation? Perhaps there are some examples where communities and cultures decide not to develop economically and to grow financially, but it does seem somewhat foreign to us, at least us Americans in the last half of the 20th century. In terms of economic development in the United States, we are now trying to escape from our large national debt, our trade imbalance and the Japanese competition in autos, electronics, computers and steel.

In Turkey one-half of the export earnings goes to pay the foreign debt, the importing of meat is hurting farmers in the eastern

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part of Turkey, the population is growing 2.5 percent per year, one million new children enter school per year and inflation and unemployment continue as major national economic problems (Financial Times Survey, 1986). Both of our countries, therefore, look to find solutions to economic problems.

Education As A Key To Economic Growth

One of the major shifts in the second half of the twentieth century is the increasing realization that education is a key factor in a country's economic growth and that universities are increasing the catalyst of this development. This is a major shift from the middle age notion of scholarship being something that is done in remote monastic communities. Now, instead of being remote, distant, isolated places that we used to call ivory towers -that is places removed from the everyday life of the world- universities in the United States are the center of a community's strong economic growth. There are many examples in the United States. Austin, Texas, is the state capitol of Texas and also the site of the major state university in Texas-the University of Texas. Madison, Wisconsin, is the state capitol but also the site of the central campus of the University of Wisconsin. A third community like this is Lincoln, Nebraska, the site of both the state capitol and the University of Nebraska. All three of these communities have done well economically and have grown substantially, although Austin and Madison are much better examples of my point than is Lincoln, Nebraska. The research triangle of North Carolina which includes three universities -the University of North Carolina, Duke, and North Carolina State University- is also an area of strong demographic and economic growth. There are other areas too-the Silicon Valley area of California and its linkage to Stanford University, the revival of Boston as a thriving area and its connections with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard, and the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and the strong connections of the University of Minnesota. Why this seemingly strong linkage between education and economics? The link is because new ideas are central to economic development. As Rosabeth Kanter (1983) said «Idea power is the most important economic stimulus of all.» Therefore, educational systems which produce students with idea power are ultimately fueling economic growth.

It, therefore, is understandable why education is now front page news in the United States. Recently, in my state of Minnesota the governor has suggested that much of the state funds will go towards education. Many other programs will be cut because he wants to make Minnesota the «brain state,» a state with an excellent educational system and continued economic development. The president of the state university system in Minnesota recently said:

In a swiftly changing society, knowledge and even wisdom are everything. Knowledge is the strategic resource, whether we use it to create new wealth and jobs, or to solve problems of human suffering, or to seek individual fulfillment and happiness.

As world competition increases, our ability to produce and use knowledge effectively will determine whether we are able to preserve the values and the standard of living we prize as a people.

(cited by Dalglish, 1987, P. ID)

That is the reason for the tremendous emphasis on education in Minnesota right now. It is also a reason why education is considered so important in the U.S. Consider all of these national reports in the last five years.

1983 — A Nation At Risk: An Imperative For Educational Reform

1983 — Report of the 20th Century Fund Task Force on Elementary and Secondary Education Policy.

1983 — Educating Americans for the 21st Century

1986 — A Nation Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century

1986 — College (University) the Undergraduate Experience in America

1986 — Holmes Report - Deans of Major Schools of Education

These reports, all major national reports, are critical of American education and American schools. But more than the criticism, they are also strongly declaring that **schools are important, teachers are important, educational achievement is important** for American society.

Applied Psychology Is A Key To Educational Achievement

My third point is that the application of the behavioral sciences and psychology is a key to educational achievement. Counseling psychology and its related fields such as counseling and guidance,

clinical psychology, school counseling, school social work, are all forms of this application.

Researchers have found that much of the variance in educational success is explained by non-intellectual factors. In research, these non-intellectual factors go by names such as adult support and encouragement, self-efficacy, a positive self-concept and motivation for achievement. When these positive conditions are gone, students achieve less than they could and when negative factors are present, students achieve less than they could. Negative factors include personal and interpersonal adjustment difficulties and conflicts. For example, there are 500,000 Turkish children in Germany, many will come back to face various conflicts. Second, children are learning English, but their parents can only speak Turkish, the children are city people, the parents have a village mentality having moved from the village. Therefore, there are difficulties in the families which affect the child. Three, some students are shy and when admitted to a university in a different city it is sometimes very difficult for them to keep the loneliness from interfering with their studies.

Extensive studies of student self-acceptance and adjustment difficulties have been completed by Hacettepe faculty members. Using her own self-acceptance scale, Doç. Dr. Yadigar Kılıçcı (1985) found in a study of almost 500 university students, that perfectionism, trying to please others, strong emotional sensitivity, shyness and self-criticism were the five major self-acceptance problems of university students. Other studies of student self-acceptance and adjustment have been completed by Dr. Gülden Bilal (1984) and Dr. Gonca Kızıltan (1984). Doç. Dr. Özcan Demirel (1986) has studied the problems of Turkish Cypriot students. Dr. Gülter Oskay (1981) considered a slight variation - the conflicts between parents and adolescents. In related work, Dr. Gül Aydın (1985) has studied depression in children and Dr. Mesut Bas (1984) has examined anxiety levels in university students. These studies, as a whole, give validation to the idea that non-intellectual factors do account for some of the variance in educational success. In short, personal problems affect the ability to learn.

Environmental conflict is another area. When children study in schools with serious organizational conflicts, the school is not as conducive to learning as it could be. When adequate administrative

supervision is not present, the school is also not as conducive to learning as it could be. These have been areas of investigation in studies by Doç. Dr. Mustafa Aydın (1979, 1986A, 1986B). His studies have revealed some interesting and crucial factors in the environmental conflicts that may prevent children from learning.

Career and vocational development is another area of concern. Çiğdem Aker, a graduate student at Hacettepe, and I found that Turkish students, the year before selecting their often life binding career area, had little career information to use in making choices. This, therefore, put them at risk for making bad choices or making choices based on erroneous information and possibly then entering areas for which they were ill suited. Certainly, Doç. Dr. Yıldız Kuzgun of Ankara University has in her work been of great help in Turkey in pointing out some of the key career development issues. For example, her work with the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (1986) has revealed important differences between need levels of students in different areas. This work and Kuzgun's other work (for example, 1982, 1983) is again more support for the importance of non-intellectual factors such as self concept in career planning and educational achievement.

One profession strongly focused on the non-intellectual factors in educational achievement is counseling and guidance. Counseling, recent research suggests, can be a powerful intervention method to improve human functioning. For example, in a recent meta-analysis of 475 outcome studies, Smith, Glass and Miller (1980) found that counseling produces positive outcomes. Recently, Gerler and Anderson (1986) reported on elementary guidance research in 18 schools with 900 children. They concluded that guidance can improve classroom behavior, prevent behavioral problems and produce a positive outlook toward school. They said:

The results of the study show that elementary school counselors can use classroom guidance to influence children's classroom behavior positively... classroom guidance can prevent problems... Research efforts of this kind should help counselors better understand the nature and value of their services and should demonstrate their contributions to the national goal of educational excellence. (pp. 80-81)

Please note not only their research support for school guidance but also their connection between guidance and educational excellence.

In a recent large national study (Bales, 1986) it was found that in treating depression, counseling and psychotherapy was as effective as drugs prescribed by a doctor but without the side effects.

For thirteen post-doctoral years I have been a teacher and a counselor. In this experience I have found that counseling produces a more profoundly positive impact on the individual and his/her capacity to learn and develop than does teaching.

Counseling can have a powerful impact on individuals as learners. Yet, this contrasts sharply with its current status in Turkey. For example, Doç. Dr. Necla Öner (1983) of Bosporous University found that counseling in schools in Turkey is often performed by people who are not competent and are poorly accepted. She is ineffective and highly bureaucratic at best. (p. 193)» In the United States there are problems, too. Guidance and counseling is not usually part of the curriculum so it is often a «side show, not the main tent». Two, guidance and counseling concerns affective development, motivation and attitude and this is often thought of as something that is not as good or proper as pure intellectual development. Three, school counselors in the U.S. often do too much paper work and administrative work and do not help children as directly as they could.

Perhaps counseling will never become equal to teaching a an important school activity. Certainly the study on teaching methods by Dr. Kamile Ün and Dr. Kemal Açıkgöz (1984) reveals that teaching -which impacts students all the time- is in need to examination and renewal in Turkey. However, counselors can have an impact too.

Concerning the impact of counseling here are ten trends in counseling in the U.S. First, in a survey of 400 graduate programs, Hollis and Wantz (1983) discovered the new courses in counselor education over the last few years consisted in order of popularity: Marriage and Family Counseling, Geriatric Counseling, Legal and Ethical Issues, Substances Abuse - Drugs and Alcohol, Consultation, MultiCultural/Cross-Cultural Counseling, Career Development, Internship, Human Sexuality and Group Counseling. Second, new accreditation standards for the accreditation of counseling and rela-

ted educational programs has been developed (Accreditation Standards, 1986). The suggestion from this group is that there be eight core areas of knowledge and skills. The eight areas are as follows: human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships, groups, career development, measurement, research and evaluation and professional orientation. In addition this group suggested that clinical instruction is extremely important and this includes extensive supervised practicum and internship training. The clinical supervisors must be highly educated, very skilled counselors who are actively working and are very good at supervision. In addition, the number of hours of practicum and internship training for students should be extensive. A third trend in the field is that graduates of counseling programs are increasingly working outside of schools in business, clinics or employment offices. Four, theories of counseling have grown. New emphases have been added to behavioral theories, cognitive theories, and integrative theories. Different approaches seem to produce similar results so the search is on for common factors across all theories which are helpful. Five, ethical issues and professional standards are a major trend. Counselors are being licensed and certified by different organizations, and the proper ethical procedures are getting more and more important as well as more complex. Six, abuse in the family is being more directly investigated. There is probably not more abuse in American families (physical, verbal, chemicals, sexual), there is just more realization about the harmful effects of abuse. Seven, equality between men and women is a trend. Counseling is focusing more on the issues of gender related concerns. Eight, psychology, guidance and counseling are combining more. The term counseling psychology is an increasingly popular title for this combination. Nine, masters degrees are in more specific areas than just counseling and guidance. The specific areas include school counseling, marriage and family counseling and mental health counseling. Last, in a recent study of 155 school counselors (Tennyson, Miller, Skovholt, and Williams, 1985) we found that trends are consistent with the past. Of 58 functions performed the top five judged by counselors were: conferring with a teacher regarding a student, assisting a student to explore occupational information, meeting with the student to resolve a problem, making a referral to another professional, and meeting with the student to meet a developmental need. This new trend of what school

counselors do is really an old trend. The same trend as before. They help students usually by working individually and intensively with them.

Summary

Americans are increasingly using counseling inside and outside of schools. In 1984 one in five Americans had used counseling services (Waldholz, 1986), and they do so because counseling is proven to be an effective way to solve problems and function at a more efficient level. Counselors exceed at: 1) understanding people 2) establishing relationships of trust with them 3) applying behavioral science ideal to help facilitate human development. The overall trend in this field is continued growth. Counseling as an applied behavioral science specialty is a contributing factor to educational achievement and even in the long run to economic growth. Consequently, counseling, in my view, is an important part of formal education and the training of counselors should be continued and strengthened in Turkish schools of education.

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