



The role and function of school sociologist in guidance system

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Abstract

Guidance services carried out at schools which are social systems and institutions remain incomplete without a sociological point of view. It is essential to have a sociological perspective in order to understand and explain individual and society. One of the scientific disciplines which is the base of guidance and psychological counselling is sociology. School sociologist tries to understand individual (student) by examining all the social environment. This examination involves both the problematic students and others. By determining the risky and disadvantageous students by means of detection, preventive guidance service will be able to provided for the students.

The duties and responsibilities of school sociologist should be defined in terms of the following topics: (1) To explore the students' family and social life. (2) To carry out youth sociology researches. (3) The coordination of free time activities and social and cultural activities (4) Sociometry and socio-drama applications. (5) To explore the school system and manage public relations process. (6) To manage the social service and help process. (7) Vocational guidance. (8) The increase of the rate of school attendance and enrollment. (9) Researching the violence at school and the gang pattern, conflict resolution and mediation. (10) Determining and treatment of the addicted students. (11) Investigating disciplinary problems.

Working in cooperation with the guidance and psychological counsellors, school sociologist will provide more effective and functional guidance service for the children, adolescents and youngs.

Keywords: Guidance, school sociologist, student, family, school, life coach.

1. Introduction

Guidance is a professional service given for the individual to understand himself, to realize his latent power, to recognize and adapt to physical and social environment and to self- actualize himself. During this process, services such as recognition of student, giving information, psychological counselling, placement and monitoring are provided.

The necessity of the guidance at schools stem from the increase in different vocations and its being more difficult to choose the correct one during the industrialization and urbanization process, the individual differences to be taken into consideration in education, educational choices according to the multiple intelligence level, modern education perception which is student-centered, the increase in choice and decision making responsibility of the individual in democratic societies, the increased importance given to the emotional aspects of the individual, developments in psychometrics, the need to have free time and incompatibility and failure problems at schools (Kepçeoğlu, 1989; Tan, 1992; Kuzgun, 2013; Bakırcıoğlu, 2003; Güven, 2009; Kaya, 2009). Guidance is a process of helping individuals in a holistic way of physical, spiritual and social integrity. Pedagogy, psychology and sociology are the leading scientific disciplines of counselling system.

Sociology analyzes social behavior in reality of individual living in a society, social facts, social institutions and social changes in terms of cause and effect relation. It is essential to have sociological perspective in order to

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understand and explain individual and society. One of the scientific disciplines which form the basis of psychological counseling and guidance is sociology. The guidance service given to individual is insufficient without knowing his all social interaction with the environment beginning from his family. Sociology examines the social behavior and relation patterns of human who is a social being. For instance, the clinical sociologists in the USA focus on the difficulties in social networks of their counselees (Macionis, 2012: 10).

School sociologist tries to understand student by examining him with all his social environment. Sociological imagination analyzes individual as a social being in reality of "individual in society". Social interactions of an individual during the socialization process that last from birth to death are very significant. The things that were experienced during childhood and youth are effective variables which form the personality and identity of the individual. By studying social problems such as violence against women, child abuse and peer violence, it can be seen that the activity of violence is learned by living and the ones who have learned this activity reproduce it later in their lives. In this context, the guidance service that is to be given during the socialization process of the individual at school years should be holistic. While the psychological counselor gives the student guidance service in terms of personal and individual context, school sociologist gives guidance service in terms of social relation pattern and social, cultural concerns. In order to give holistic guidance service, psychological counselor and school sociologist should pull together in coordination. The first scientist to discuss the term school sociologist and his duties in literature is Bernard Sklar from the USA in 1972.

Within the context of the term "Risk Society" which is used by the sociologists in the twenty first century to define new society, all societies are faced with the threat of social and cultural risk.

Thus the drop out of school rate among children, adolescents and the young, the increase in violence and crime rates, child abuse, the increase in rape rates, the spread in anti-social behaviour, the proliferation of separated families, one-parent families etc. which can be observed in all of the societies' social and cultural risk structure reveal the necessity of guidance service to be carried out by the school sociologists within the social perspective.

2. Findings and Discussion: Duties and Responsibilities of School Sociologist

The position and the staff of school sociologist should be created in guidance service. All personal rights of guidance teacher should be given. Guidance teacher and school sociologist should carry on their duties in coordination. The duties and responsibilities of school sociologist should be defined as follows.

1. To analyse the family and society life of students. Both the child and the young are whole with their families and social environment. Guidance service can't be given to a child or young by isolating them from their families. By means of family monography method used in sociology, it is important to specify all of the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the family and to help and to get to know the student with a holistic approach (Sklar, 1972). The disadvantageous children and young who are members of separated families should be determined and helped in the context of family sociology. Moreover social analysis report should be prepared and the families in need of social aid should be detected. The data should be shared with the Family and Social Policies Provincial Directorate and the families in need of social aid should be provided with social service.

2. To do sociology of youth researches: Puberty is a sensitive transition period from childhood to adolescence when physical, psychological and social changes are experienced intensively. During this period young people need guidance more than ever. While the child takes his parents as a reference until he starts school, at primary school the role model for him is his teacher. When the child starts secondary school he takes his peers and friends as reference due to puberty. It is important to give guidance service to adolescents who are not involved in a good and positive peer group so that they do not acquire violent behaviour. In this context, school sociologist and guidance teacher should make interviews and surveys in order to find out the sociological profile of the young. Social, economic and cultural positions of the young should be determined and they should be supported by detecting their problems and needs. In terms of generation gap, the tension points between the parents and the child should be determined and consultancy service should be given to both the child and parents. Researches on youth sub-cultures and groupings should be carried out, the reasons of alienation should be detected and the young should be guided.

3. The coordination of free time activities and social and cultural activities: It is significant to organise free time activities and social and cultural activities in order for the students to actualize self-knowledge, realising the potential and self actualization processes all of which are the basis of guidance. School sociologist and the guidance

teacher should ensure the students to take part in the social clubs according to their abilities during the process of organising social and cultural activities. One can't deny the importance of art, sport and culture in social relations. The students will be able to spend their free time functionally by means of social and cultural activities and they will be kept away from negative habits.

4. *Sociometry and socio-drama applications:* Revealing the social relation pattern in the class by applying sociometry and providing consultancy service to the class teacher are some of the duties of the school sociologist. Sociometry is one the application areas of sociology. Necessary guidance service should be given to the students by detecting class leader, the cliques and the lonely students in the class by means of sociometry application. Besides, the social problems are role-played just like in the stage by the students with the moderation of sociolog. By means of this method called sociodrama, catharsis is aimed for students to empathize with the others, the detection of problem and conflict resolution.

5. *To do research about school system to manage the process of public relations:* As being a social institution the schools', the director, the teacher and the students' interaction among themselves should be provided and researched. Orientation programs should be organised for the newly appointed techers and students. The cooridnation and relation between the school administration and the teachers should be strengthened (Sklar, 1972). Culture of the institution and social relations should be improved by organising social activities. School-family cooperation should be strengthened and oriented. Transferring the needs of parents to school administration and teachers and the requests of the school administration and teachers to parents are among the responsibilities school sociologist and guidance teacher. By organising conferences and meetings for the parents, they should be informed about the psychology and sociology of both the child and the young. Besides they should be informed about the issues such as violence, alcohol, drug and internet addiction by means of those conferences and meetings. An organisation should be held in order to introduce the school and to measure the efficiency of it. The school sociologist should organise the external and internal public relation activities of the institution.

6 - *Managing the social service and support process:* Some necessary agencies should be cooperated with to provide support and assistance for the disadvantaged students and their families. Drug, cigarette and internet addicted individuals should be identified and guided for treatment. In this context "school risk maps" should be drawn. Within the school system where an intensive violence exists, the students showing risky behaviors should be identified and solutions should be produced in coordination of guidance and psychiatry. 75% of Turkey's population lives in urban areas. The peasantry dissolves in Turkey. The process of integration to city is problematic for the migrants.

Guidance is important for the "new urban people" who are neither peasant nor urban within the slum culture. Especially at schools in the slum areas, guidance services primarily need to be empowered by the school sociologists. Guidance from the school sociologist will facilitate to adopt the city primarily for students then women and whole the members of the family during the integration process.

Guidance should be provided not only for those who remain in limbo but also for all of the urban people affected negatively by individualistic, sordid, cosmopolitan and alienating culture of the city.

7 - *Vocational guidance:* Choice of profession need to be made consciously from the childhood. Students' interests and abilities should be discovered according to the levels of multiple intelligence and function of the guidance services should be increased in directing them to profession. Through the career days in coordination of the school sociologist and guidance teacher, introducing the professions and telling their status and place in society by the ones practicing them is important for a conscious choice. Within the context of the sociology of professions all the aspects of the professions should be explained.

In Turkey, in 2013 totally 1 million 923 thousand 33 candidates applied for Student Selection and Placement Examination. 560 thousand 763 of the candidates were the ones settled into a higher education program in previous years. Still half a million students studying at university are going to take the exam again and this situation reflects an unhappy youth audience. In this context, importance of the vocational guidance is becoming more important. Vocational guidance is a collective work required to be carried out by both guidance teacher and school sociologist.

8 - *Increasing the school attendance and enrollment rates:* Despite the fact that compulsory education increased to 12 years in our country, the rates of attendance and enrollment to school after primary and secondary school, especially for female students has been decreasing in rural and slum areas. To enhance students' education level guidance services should be given to students and families. Students for higher levels of education should be given.

School sociologist and guidance teacher should try to help students attend the school process by determining transition rates between education level and attendance and investigating the ones who drop out. Necessary social support should be provided for children, young people who drop out and their families.

9 – *Researching the violence at school and the gang pattern, conflict resolution and mediation*: Acts of violence increasingly experienced at schools and emerging gang patterns should be analyzed from a sociological perspective. Social and cultural reasons of violence, networks of gang relationships, peer violence and events of violence in family, cyber bullying or e- bullying should be examined by school sociologists. After determining the situation, conflict resolution and mediation trainings need to be carried out by the guidance teachers and schools sociologists in coordination. It is primarily important to analyze the works of determining the sociological and psychological reasons of the violence, preventing the conflicts of communication and violence within the context of the social and cultural structure of the current society. The violence behavior cannot be analyzed without sociological perspective which analyzes social and cultural codes of the society.

10 - *Determining and treatment of the addicted students*: Guidance service carries out awareness trainings related to smoking observed even in elementary school level, alcoholic beverages, addiction of drugs and internet. Globalization rapidly affects and changes the individual and societies. Children and especially young people are guided by the internet -based new media. Within the framework of the internet games addiction, tendency of violence and patterns of risky behavior are becoming increasingly widespread in children and young people who take the violent behavior as a role model. School sociologists investigating the sociological reasons of the internet addiction as well as the reasons of drug addiction take role in the treatment of addiction in coordination with counsellors and psychiatrists. While the psychological treatment of the addiction is undertaken by psychological counselors and psychiatrists, sociological treatment is undertaken by the school sociologist. In coordination, the school sociologist and guidance specialist undertake the duty of consultancy to help the addicted student have a new social and cultural environment and form the elements substituted for the factors of deprivation caused by the addiction. Also they undertake the duty of consultancy for free time activities, social and cultural activities and social programs targeting the adaptation to the society.

11 - *Investigating disciplinary problems*: It is important to investigate disciplinary problems caused by the students who can't adapt to the society and having anti-social personality traits and also searching the socio-cultural characteristics of the students who received disciplinary punishment (Sklar, 1972). School sociologist should have a function in transferring the rules and by-laws of living at school and in the society to the students.

3. Conclusions

School as an institution is a social system with students, parents, teachers and directors. So when looked from the perspective of sociology, schools remain incapable in carrying out the guidance services without "school sociologist". Therefore, it is a functional necessity to employ school sociologists for guidance services at high school, secondary and primary schools.

In a country like Turkey processes of farming society, industrial society and also information society are experienced together; thus traditional culture, modern culture and postmodern culture are experienced together, as well. Therefore it is important giving psychological and sociological support to new generations within the National Education System. For this, it will be a contemporary attainment and progress for Turkey to ensure the school counselors and school sociologists work in a coordinated manner.

Narcissistic and alienated individuals in global neoliberal order are in need of more guidance. Socrates's motto "know thyself" is found on the basis of the guidance system. Sociologists analyze the society and culture. Carrying out the guidance service by sociologists within the reality of "the individual in the society" will empower the guidance system. Reaching to the stage of "self-actualization" which is nirvana in Maslow's hierarchy of needs goes from knowing yourself. If to say with Yunus Emre's expressions "Knowledge should mean a full grasp of knowledge / Knowledge means to know yourself, heart and soul / If you have failed to understand yourself / Then all of your reading has missed its call."

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