

# **A Study of School Counselling and Strategies to Support Models of Mental Health in Students**

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## **Abstract:**

Healthy mental state is an essential component which maintains overall health of both, children and adults. In many cases of adults, who suffer from mental problems, early symptoms were evident, when the person was a kid or adolescent; nevertheless, they were frequently ignored or not recognised. The responsibility of assisting students with their varied needs across a variety of environments falls on the shoulders of teachers who are specialised in guidance and counselling. In fact, there is no exception, when it comes to supporting gifted individuals in academic and non-academic interaction, and teachers are required to be conscious of the subtle variances in cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects that are demonstrated by their students who are above and beyond the norm. This research makes use of counselling outcome reports and archival data of student-clients, in addition to an auto ethnography study of the researcher's counselling process, in order to propose a "Single-Session Developmental Counselling", as a proof indigenous model, for counselling Indian school kids. The analysed data reveals a variety of aspects relating to the setting as well as the procedure of counselling along with a number of effective counselling methods.

**Keywords:** Mental, Health, Counselling, School, auto ethnography.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Counselling in schools (public or private) can take place, for students in kindergarten to grade twelve. Counselling services are provided to students in order to improve their academic performance, attendance, and behaviour, as well as to aid in the development of their social skills. School counsellors are licenced mental health professionals, who have earned master's degrees or above, and are responsible for counselling students and playing an instructional role in and around schools. Numerous schools have full-time counsellors on staff, in order to support students who are going through difficulties in their personal lives or in their academic work. They also assist students in making plans for future careers and to interact when they are having difficulties in their behavioural, physical, or mental health [1].

## **History of School Counselling**

At the beginning of the 20th century, in response to the expansion of industrial cities [2] secondary schools started to place a greater emphasis on the teaching of subjects that would better prepare students for entry-level employment. In order to provide a hand in these initiatives, a number of educators took on extra responsibilities as career counsellors.

- Initially the year 1917, specific laws were made to financially support the vocational guidance programmes. This eventually repeated in the growth of school guiding and counselling profession. The year 1917 marks the beginning of the process of drafting specific laws for financial support to vocational assistance programmes, which has resulted in expansion of the profession of school guidance and counselling.
- In the 1920s, the state of New York became the first in the nation to implement certification standards for school counsellors.
- In the beginning of 1930s, urban primary schools started providing students with counselling services.
- In 1950s, the humanistic psychology and individual psychology movements began to gain into main stream. This led to a substantial shift in the focus of school counselling. Counselling programmes began to incorporate more of a holistic approach to helping students.
- In 1970s, the field of school counselling expanded further, with a view to assist kids in developing personally, academically, and socially.
- During 1990s, there was a movement in education, across the country that was focused on standards and laws, such as the “No Child Left behind Act”, were passed. It made necessary for school counsellors to come up with creative and unique ways to assist children [3].

## **What Do School Counsellors Do?**

Initially, the primary responsibility of school counsellors, who are often referred to as guidance counsellors, was to assist students in the process of career development. The function of the school counsellor, in today's schools is varied. It differs from one institution to another, depending on the mandates imposed, not only by the state, but also by each individual school [4].

Some of the responsibilities of school counsellors are as follows:

- Delivering lectures on topics related to mental health and societal concerns. It's not uncommon for school counsellors to run workshops on how to study more effectively, supply students with information on how to handle bullies, or teach sessions on sexual education.

- Vocational guidance. A good number of school counsellors assist students in getting ready for college or making decisions about jobs.
- Students frequently seek the assistance of school counsellors in mediating disagreements with their classmates, teachers, or family members. During the regular school day, many guidance counsellors also make themselves available to students for brief counselling sessions.
- Intervention in the early stages. School counsellors get training that covers a variety of topics, including learning disabilities and psychiatric issues that are frequently seen in children and adolescents. In addition to this, they may offer referrals, advice, and education to parents regarding issues pertaining to mental health.
- Services catered to individuals with special requirements: Counsellors frequently provide assistance to kids with special needs, in order to facilitate their integration into classroom settings, and they may also supervise programmes that cater to the needs of students with special needs or learning problems.

Further, counsellors often help students:

- Ensure that academic standards are met at all times and establish academic goals for yourself.
- Acquire the abilities necessary to improve your organisation, study habits, and management of time.
- Make an effort to work through any personal issues that may be affecting your academic performance or your relationships.
- Improve social skills.
- Learn how to cope with the effects of trauma due to school or community violence, accidents, and other traumatic events.
- Utilize testing to determine your areas of interest, your talents, and your aptitudes.

Individual therapy is something that kids can receive from school counsellors in order to work through personal or social issues. In addition to this, they may provide counselling in smaller groups to assist students in developing their hearing and social skills, becoming more empathetic toward the experiences of others, and establishing social support through positive interactions with their classmates. School counsellors offer free support to students who, for whatever reason, are unable to obtain mental health treatment in any other setting. Additionally, school counsellors offer help to the teaching staff by aiding with the development of programmes to improve mental health and school safety, as well as by providing assistance with classroom management strategies. When it is absolutely

essential, counsellors will step in to restore order in a learning environment that has become chaotic.

### **Do School Counsellors Diagnose Mental Health Concerns?**

It is estimated that 21% of children in the United States, between the ages of 9 and 17, suffer from serious mental health issues that can be diagnosed; however, only 20% of these children achieve a diagnosis and receive treatment in any given year. Despite the fact that school counsellors may have suspicions regarding the prevalence of learning challenges or other illnesses, such as ADHD, they are not authorised to diagnose or prescribe antibiotics for these conditions. However, some schools do have school psychiatrists, and these medical experts are able to give medicine to pupils, albeit with the normal requirement that they first get consent from the students' parents [5].

When a school counsellor has reason to believe that a student may be struggling with issues related to learning, behaviour, or mental health, they will normally make a referral to an appropriate community professional. Learning difficulties can be identified by school or educational psychologists, as well as, neuropsychologists, whereas Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is typically diagnosed by psychiatrists, physicians, or clinical psychologists working in private practice [6].

## **2. RELATED WORK**

Robert Pincus et al (2020) [7]. Our culture has undergone significant shifts as a result of the global epidemic caused by COVID-19. These shifts will have long-term repercussions for our younger generations. Worries about sociality, addiction to technology, and school safety have been raised, as schools prepared to make the transition back to their normal routines over the next several months. These concerns stem from social isolation and traumatic events that occurred during the students' formative years. This emergency will need coordinated initiatives to assist students in not only returning to normal academically, but also in helping them cope with the trauma they have experienced in the past and are continuing to feel. The perspectives of school counsellors can be very well utilised to acquire a better knowledge of the social and emotional effects of COVID-19 by working in conjunction with school administrators, with an emphasis on the employment of school counsellors as a mental health provider in schools. The authors highlight the mental health training, that school counsellors receive and their role in combating this issue. Additionally, they provide practical applications that can be used to develop a systemic approach for social and emotional prevention and intervention during and after the pandemic.

Marco Colizzi (2020) [8] Like other areas of health care that have shifted toward secondary prevention, mental health care has done the same, making an effort to diagnose and treat mental illnesses at the earliest feasible stage. Converging evidence, on the other hand, casts a new light on the possibilities of primary prevention and promotion measures for the mental health of young people. Our goal was to conduct a fresh analysis of such evidence.

We took a look at the existing state of knowledge about the implementation of promotional and preventative interventions aimed at improving the mental health of young people. The first symptoms of half of all mental disorders appear by the age of 14, and these symptoms are typically accompanied by non-specific psychosocial disturbances that have the potential to develop into any major mental disorder. Furthermore, non-specific psychosocial disturbances account for 45% of the global burden of disease in people aged 0 to 25 years. Despite the fact that some steps have been taken to enhance the deployment of services specific to young people, the majority of the mental health needs, which young people have at this crucial period, are still not being met. As such, preventative methods need to be rethought and redesigned within the context of a youth-focused multidisciplinary and trans-diagnostic framework, with the goal of modifying probable psychopathological trajectories at an earlier stage. According to the available evidence, it is not reasonable to regard the promotion and prevention of mental health to be the only responsibility of professionals working in the field of mental health. Integrated and multidisciplinary services are required, so that the number of viable interventions can be expanded and the danger of a poor long-term outcome can be reduced. These services also have the potential to reduce the expenses incurred by the healthcare system. However, mental health professionals have the responsibility, scientifically, ethically, and morally, to point out the way forward to all of the social, political, and other health care bodies that are involved in the process of addressing mental health issues during the formative years of adolescence.

Danielle Swick and Joelle D. Powers (2018) [9] It is generally accepted that roughly 25% of children and adolescents of school age struggle with issues related to their mental and behavioural health. The vast majority of these young people do not receive adequate treatment, which leaves them at risk for unfavourable outcomes related to their education, such as issues with attendance, behaviour, and academic performance. Inability to gain access to suitable and consistent care, particularly assessment and intervention, is a typical obstacle that must be overcome before receiving treatment. In schools, noticed that a student may be struggling with mental health concerns, he or she is frequently sent for therapy in the community. This strategy, despite its good intentions, is often ineffective when applied to families that struggle with obstacles, such as language issue, a lack of transportation or health insurance, or lack of flexibility with their jobs that prevents them from making it to appointments. In North Carolina, innovative school-community cooperation made an effort to conquer these challenges by delivering mental health services directly to students while they were still in the classroom. The School-Based Support programme was able to significantly improve students' academic results and address many of the barriers that prevented them from receiving necessary medical attention. This report, from the field, describes the repercussions of untreated mental health problems among children, the barriers to seeking treatment for mental health, and the methods in which schools are now addressing the mental health needs of students. After that, we go into details regarding the formation of the School-Based Support programme, through collaboration between the school and the community, the programme components, the assessment results, and a case example.

Kirti Matliwala (2017) [10] the effect, of counselling on the mental health of PG students, was the topic of this study project. The participants were postgraduate students from VNSGU in Surat, who came to the psychological counselling centre for counselling sessions. There were 108 of them in total. Using a sampling process called random selection, thirty students were chosen from this population. In order to collect data, the researcher used his or her own questionnaire, in addition to unstructured interviews. The qualitative method was applied to the analyse the information. The findings indicated that counselling was of significant assistance to postgraduate students. They were able to focus on their purpose, feel more relaxed, and were conscious of both their strengths and weaknesses. Students were able to organise their timetables in accordance with the objective. They could get the ability to take control of their feelings. According to the findings of this research, counselling services ought to be made available in all types of educational institutions. Students should have access to a counsellor who is qualified to assist them in times of need, and this counsellor should make himself available to the students, so that they can freely communicate with their counsellor.

Traci P. Collins (2014) [11] Substantial number of children and adolescents, who struggle with their mental health, can be effectively reached through the use of school counsellors, who are a resource that is well-positioned to do so. In this special edition of “The Professional Counsellor,” devoted to school counselling, several papers examine the use of top-down, systemic advocacy initiatives as a point of intervention in the treatment of mental health issues affecting children and adolescents. In other articles, the topic of enhancing child and adolescent mental health through a localised, ground-level approach is investigated. This is accomplished through establishing school counsellors' skill areas and particular school counselling interventions. School counsellors' professional identities, training, self-efficacy, supervision, burnout, career competencies, cultural competencies, and how to measure the impact and effectiveness of interventions, some of the topics that are discussed in these articles. The author examines the significance of the function that school counsellors play inside schools, as well as the challenges that school counsellors have while trying to fulfil their counselling responsibilities.

Mina Fazel et al (2014) [12] If mental health services are integrated into the school system, children can see improvements in their mental health and scholastic success. This can lead to the creation of a continuum of integrative care. It is possible that the educational and mental health systems so as support can be reorganised. So as to support the application of evidence-based treatment, in order to facilitate the strengthening of this continuum and the optimal development of children. Integrative techniques, that bring together interventions at both, the classroom and individual student levels, have a lot of untapped potential to explore. There is pressing need for a robust research agenda that centres on the execution and on-going maintenance of interventions, at the system level, over a period of time. Assimilation of mental health and education has ethical as well as scientific justifications. Integration increases the number of people who have access to services, and when combined with the use of practises, supported by evidence, integration can contribute to the healthy growth and development of children.

Kelly A. Kozlowski and Susan Huss (2013) [13] unlike clinical mental health Counsellors, school counsellors need to have specific educational requirements. According to the American School Counsellor Association (ASCA), school counsellors are expected to have advanced knowledge in the areas of programme development, programme leadership, collaborative practises, and proper referral procedures. Though the specialised requirements of school counsellors have been described in the research, there is a dearth of information regarding how these requirements might be met in practical manner. This article focuses on some of the specific requirements, that school counsellors in training have, and it offers suggestions for how these requirements can be brought in practice.

### **3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY**

Archival research, assessment reports, and auto ethnography were the three methods that were utilised to carry out this qualitative exploratory study. The data from the archives came from a random sample of 700 children who had received professional counselling from an independent school counselling centre. Methodical analysis was performed on the counselling process, focusing on the primary reasons (presenting difficulties), that students sought out counselling, as well as, many different interventions and approaches that were utilised during the session. The approach of auto ethnography [14] was utilised to analyse and understand the counselling process, that the researchers went through a survey was carried out among the students who utilised counselling services. In order to many components of the counselling process, style, and strategies employed by the researcher, as well as to uncover specific aspects enjoyed by the student-clients.

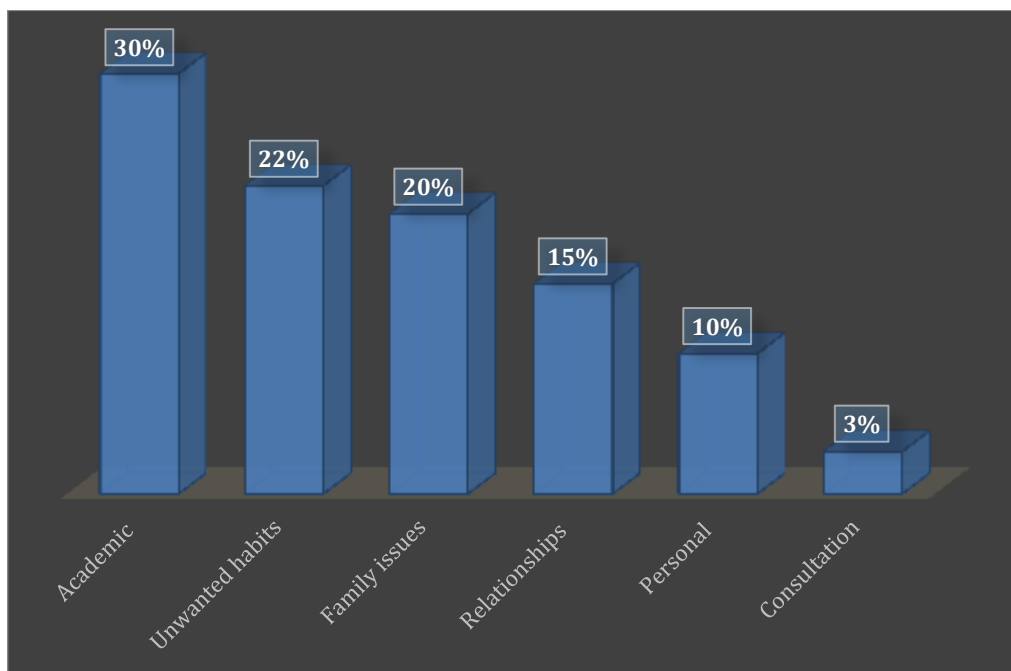
### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Six overarching categories were used to classify the primary concerns that brought the students to seek therapy. Academic concerns, undesired habits, family worries, relationship issues, personal issues, and general consultation are main issues that can be addressed here. The following pie chart provides percentage breakdown of the most pressing issues that brought students to the attention of the counselling staff at the school [15]. [Table 1. Fig 1]

**Table 1: displaying significant problems Students came to seek counselling.**

1	Academic	30%
2	Unwanted habits	22%
3	Family issues	20%
4	Relationships	15%
5	Personal	10%

6	Consultation	3%
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**Figure 1: displaying significant problems Students came to seek counselling.**

The most common issue, that brought students to seek counselling was related to their academic performance (30%), followed by undesirable behaviours (22%) and problems with their families (20%). Negative behaviours primarily associated with the usage of alcohol and drugs, smoking, and the use of pan and tobacco. Love triangles and other relationship difficulties are also big concerns for today's school-aged children (15%). Within the context of Western counselling, an eclectic approach can be defined as a pragmatic combination of humanistic, cognitive, transpersonal, and psychodynamic modes of counselling. This method was the primary mode of therapy practised at the centre. The concerns of the students were addressed using a “One-of-a-kind Ecological Development Approach”, beginning with an in-depth discussion of the student's family history and progressing toward independence, responsibility, and the establishment of goals [16].

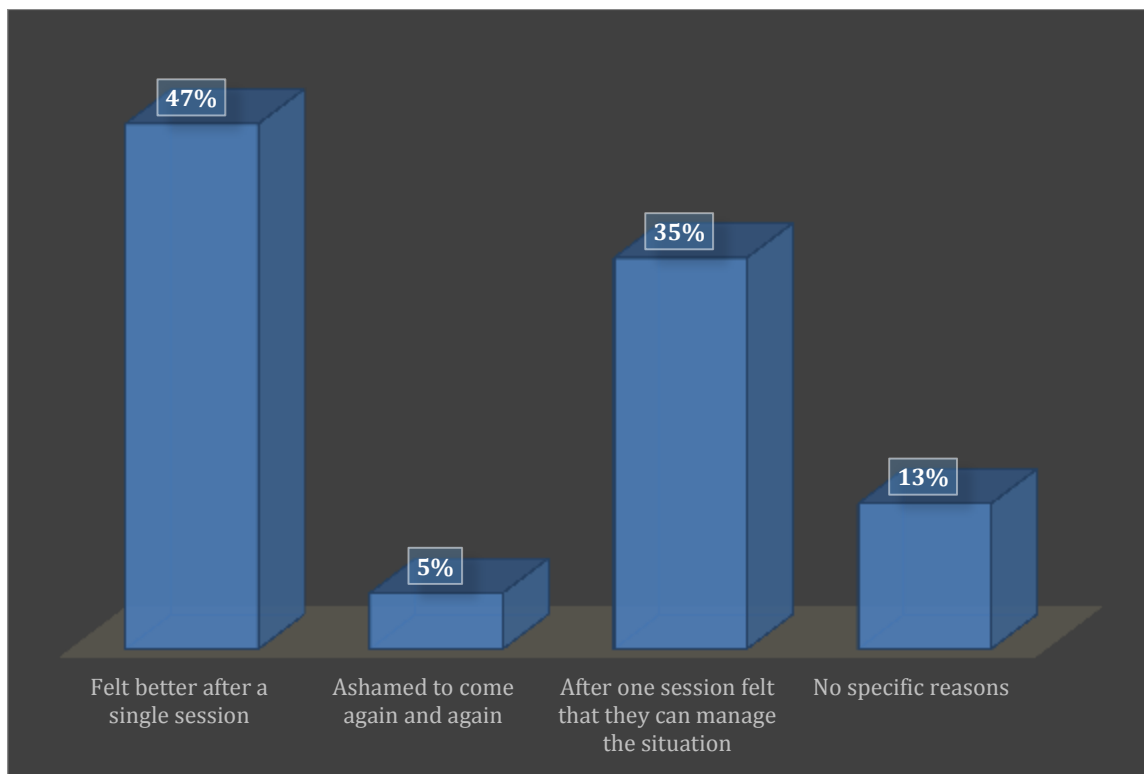
Despite the fact that 500 cases were asked to come in for follow-up counselling, only 50 students, out of a total of 700 student-client records, responded for follow-up counselling. In response to questions regarding the absence at follow-up services, the students offer the following explanations:

**Table 2: The causes why follow-up services are not attended**

1.	Felt better after a single session	47%
2.	Ashamed to come again and again	5%



3.	After one session, felt that they can manage the situation	35%
4.	Nonspecific reasons	13%



**Figure 2: The causes why follow-up services are not provided**

According to the findings of the study, Western models have been subjected to a number of changes, including adaptations, revisions, and alterations, which have resulted in an extremely high rate of success in therapy as well as higher levels of satisfaction expressed by student-clients. The Western models of counselling structure and procedure have been modified in the following significant ways in order to provide better results [17].

- a) The length of time spent in therapy Sessions in Western therapy models are often prescribed to last for a total of fifty minutes. On the other hand, the duration of a single session might often last anywhere from 90 to 120 minutes. The pupils have expressed a preference for receiving counselling in a single session instead of several sessions.
- b) The significance of the client's family history: During the first stage of the counselling process, it is vital to do an in-depth investigation of the client-family student's history, in order to comprehend both, the client and the issues. In contrast

to the Western approach, the problems, a client is experiencing are never fully comprehended by simply learning about their personal history [18].

- c) Sharing personal experiences, as well as, those of other clients during the process: One of the aspects of the counselling process, that is highly recommended and appreciated, is the counsellor sharing either his own experience or the experience of another student-client who is experiencing or has previously experienced problems and issues that are similar. This will help, the student-client to feel more at ease, with the situation, as they will realise that they are not the only ones struggling with this issue.
- d) The use of proverbs and sayings as therapeutic interventions: When the counsellor makes use of proverbs and sayings of great men to encourage change, the student-clients place a greater emphasis on what the counsellor has to say. Additionally, the utilisation of pertinent phrases from spiritual literature as a means of higher inspiration and change is something that is very much valued.
- e) The Counsellor as a Self-Appointed Expert: The Student-Clients look to the Counsellor to provide them with a ready-made response or solution to all of their difficulties. It is important for the counsellor to use caution and refrain from giving extremely opinionated and personal comments. In the same vein, if the counsellor were to forcefully oppose such expectations, not only would he or she lose the client's faith, but the outcome would also be put in jeopardy.
- f) Termination of therapy: Western models highlight the termination of therapy as a step, in which the therapist is required to provide an explanation for the cessation of therapy, once a specific degree of progress has been accomplished. However, in the context of India, termination is not a serious issue because, once a student-client has gained certain insights or been relieved from the problem, the student-client may not return for counselling, even if the counsellor requests follow-up sessions. This is the case, even if the student-client is not relieved from the problem.
- g) Proficiency in many cultures: India is a diverse nation in terms of its languages, religions, social castes, and traditions and practises. Even among members of the same caste, who live in two separate villages or even among people of different castes who live in the same village, there are still significant cultural distinctions. As such, it is imperative that every counsellor be able to do multicultural therapy [19].

A model of mental health counselling delivered in a single session, known as an indigenous model, has been developed with the specific intention of serving Indian School students. This model is developed by taking into account the outcomes of the research, as well as, the aspects of the counselling process that the researcher found to be effective. During the course of a single counselling session, the student-client is guided through the process of

problem identification and shot on target for the foreseeable future [20]. Through family analysis to identify and position the problems, development concerns of the stage of growth (identity creation), culture-sensitive and indigenous approach, and evidence-based practise are the primary components of this paradigm (combination of accepted best practises by the student clients). This specific counselling paradigm focuses primarily on the following three steps:

It is considered that all of the personal, interpersonal, family, and social concerns of student-clients are connected, in some way or another, to the uncertainty that results from the adolescent/early adult developmental job [21]. The issues are analysed through the lens of a developmental crisis, which occurs between the ages of adolescents and early adults, and accordingly the right solutions are applied.

Developing a persona is one of the most important aspects of the transition to adulthood. So the counsellor gives special focus to this aspect of the client's growth throughout the quarter-life crisis.

The setting of academic, professional, and overall life goals: Since many students choose a specific discipline of study due to the demands placed on them by their families [22], the sessions focus on motivating students to succeed better academically and making good career choices. In addition to receiving help for choosing a job path, students also receive direction for choosing a life goal, as against focusing on achieving short-term objectives.

The following is a rundown of the four processes that comprise a single session of mental health counselling: It is necessary, from a developmental standpoint, to provide students with unqualified acceptance in order to assist them with the challenges that they face. It is of the utmost importance to acknowledge the challenges presented by the student-worldview client's and belief system. The following are the four phases of this methodology, which are based on this fundamental counselling philosophy:

- a) Investigating the student's family history in the Indian context: The student's family history needs to be investigated in great detail in order to gain an understanding of the one-of-a-kind family culture and dynamics. This is due to the fact that many different personal difficulties are intertwined with various concerns pertaining to the family.
- b) Investigating the issue and worldview: The second step consists of exploring the difficulties by understanding and embracing the personal experiences of the pupils. This is done to facilitate the exploration of the viewpoint. In Western models, empathic understanding is frequently emphasised; nevertheless, in order to have a complete understanding of the issue [23], the empathic understanding of the client must be substituted.
- c) The Process of Treatment Once the client's history, belief system, and the issues at hand have been investigated, in the context of their worldview and the dynamics of

their family, the process of therapy can begin. In the course of treatment, one may choose to work toward reconciliation with oneself, with other people, or even with spiritual or religious entities. Breathing techniques, imaging exercises, and visualisation exercises, all of which are fundamental components of the Indian culture, could be put to use in a variety of contexts and settings. It is possible that prayer should be promoted, due to the fact that many religious rituals of different religious sects are analogous to catharsis. If the customer is not particularly religious, it is best to concentrate on certain morals and spiritual principles (such as being just, being reasonable, and having the ability to choose for one, etc.).

- d) Goal setting and facilitating new orientation: In this final step, you will support and assist the client in developing new patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaviour, through the use of visualisation and auto-suggestions. Students would be motivated to reach a new realisation and perspective, if they were pointed in the direction of excellent sayings from ancient wisdom, proverbs, and statements spoken by notable people. Providing an assurance of aid in the future, by saying something like "I will pray for you..." as the session is drawing to a close, would provide an amazing amount of positive feelings and confidence, which can generate an additional boost to the healing process.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research was carried out at a school counselling centre with the goal of developing a concrete proof mental health counselling model suitable for use, with kids attending Indian schools. The analysed data revealed a variety of aspects relating to the setting and the procedure of counselling. Additionally, it revealed a number of effective counselling methods. In contrast to the culturally insensitive counselling models prevalent in the West, an indigenous model of single-session counselling, that is more pragmatic and places more emphasis on the students psychosocial growth was developed. Since the data were acquired from a single counselling centre, there is scope for subsequent research that can be carried out utilising data from a variety of different environments.

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