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Counselor Education for Adult Education

Dr. Abdulrahman S. Hamidi

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, College of Education, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Adults need counseling as much as younger students. Often adults have more pressures and demands placed upon them than younger students. A well designed counseling program can offer help to adults in dealing with their special needs as students. Counselors need special training which includes characteristics of adults, counseling them, and community resources information. Aspects of a good counseling program in any school for adults includes: helping adults define and achieve their goals, testing of aptitude for assistance in level placement, and helping students with personal problems which block their education.

Most adults need and desire educational counseling. The age of the student does not free him from the need for new information, or new insights, or new awareness to aid him in making realistic choices and decisions. The adult school counselor's function is assisting in helping the adult to coordinate his personal needs with the necessities of the educational system. Individual needs, desires, ambitions and hopes cannot be separated from family, financial and other daily problems. The adult school counselor copes with present problems and long range goals. He is there to provide information and if needed to provide support.

The counselor's Professional Preparation

In order to provide this service effectively the student should have the following academic preparation:

A. The counselor should be able to administer standardized tests such as tests of aptitude and interpret them for the assistance of the adult student in his planning for educational goals. Thus, testing and evaluation should be an integral part of a counselor education program.

B. The counselor is a community resource person and for this reason should have a practicum with at least one good school counselor who knows community resources.

C. Counseling techniques should be a two part approach:

1. Counseling theory: including various personality theories;

2. Practicum in counseling under supervision.

D. Sociology and group interaction: group behavior is important in understanding and helping counselees. Sociology is essential in understanding and meeting the needs and pressures which society exerts upon adult students, especially in a traditional society such as Saudi Arabia.

E.These courses may be offered in as many discrete parts as program planners feel is advisable and should be a specialization of a general degree in Adult Education.

Some Counseling Techniques Which Help Adult Counselees

1. Adults learn more effectively when accepted and valued as persons. Everyone likes to see himself and his behavior as being important.

2. Learning is more effective when the adult can see opportunities for self improvement. Learning is most effective when directed toward an achievable goal. Adults who are insecure about their ability to return to education often require support and assistance in planning their goals.

3. If an adult feels that something is true, then he will behave as if it were true. The Counselor must be concerned with how the adult sees himself and his environment and how these factors affect his learning readiness.

4. The counselor must be a sincere person, whom the adult learner would like to model.

5. The counselor must be able to communicate with adults effectively. Effective communication would require the counselor be:

1. open.

2. non-judgemental, and

3. supportive

The adult counselor must be a good counselor. He must also be able to express himeself in ways which adult students understand.

Characteristics and Special Needs of Adult Counselees

1. Adults lack confidence in themselves in the educational settings.

2. Adults need to see immediate results from their interest.

3. Adults need long range goals in order to keep up their interest.

4. Adult students often have more family and financial pressures on them than younger students.

5. Planning education around their family life often creates problems.

6. Adults have more experience than children; this is a big advantage in counseling them.

7. Adult students may have old painful memories of failure in education when they were children.

8. Adult students need orientation in school success techniques:

- They need help in learning to study effectively and test taking skills.

9. Adult students often come to the counselor wanting a magic solution to their problems.

10. Adult students may be experiencing a conflict between what they want to achieve and what they realistically feel that they can achieve.

Duties and Functions of The Adult Counselor
An Adult Education Program:

In small programs, budgeting may not allow for a full time counselor so that the duties of the teacher and counselor must be assumed by one person. Hopefully in a larger program, a full time counselor would be considered important. Regardless of the counselor's status some of his duties are:

1. An effective program of adult counseling should have a well-defined set of objectives. For example:

a. How can counseling services help adults achieve their goals?

b. How can counseling help adults learn more effectively?

c. Can personal counseling help adults continue successfully toward their educational goal?

2. A successful adult education program will have developed effective ways of informing new or potential students about educational possibilities offered.

3. Counselors need to be available for aptitude and skills testing for advising students about where they start in the program.

4. Counselors need to help students who have personal problems which block their entry, continuation, or completion of their educational goals: for example, he should know community resources available such as bus schedules and locations of day nurseries. He should know about services available in the community.

The difference between staying enrolled and dropping out of Adult Education programs depends to a large extent on the role played by the Adult Counselor who can foster the students self concept through encouragement and positive rewards.

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إعداد المرشد النفسي في برامج تعليم الكبار

الدكتور عبد الرحمن سعد الحميدي

كلية التربية، جامعة الملك سعود، الرياض، المملكة العربية السعودية

يحتاج الطلاب الكبار إلى الإرشاد بقدر ما يحتاج إليه الطلاب الصغار. وكثيراً ما يقع الكبار تحت ضغوط ومتطلبات أكثر مما يقع تحتها الصغار. ويمكن لبرنامج الإرشاد المصمم تصميماً جيداً أن يقدم العون للطلاب الكبار وهم يواجهون حاجاتهم الخاصة باعتبارهم طلاباً. والمرشدون في حاجة إلى تدريب خاص يتضمن خصائص الكبار وطرق إرشادهم ومصادر المعلومات في البيئة التي يعيشون فيها. ومن جوانب برنامج الإرشاد الجيد للكبار في أية مدرسة ما يلي: مساعدة الكبار في أن يحددوا ويحققوا أهدافهم، قياس الاستعدادات والقدرات تمهيداً للمساعدة في وضع الطلاب في المستوى التعليمي المناسب، مساعدة الطلاب في التغلب على المشكلات الشخصية التي تعوق استمرار تعلمهم.