

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GUIDANCE WORKERS AND TEACHERS IN
KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND DEVELOPMENT

by

Robert L.^{EE} Baker

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Differences Between Guidance Workers and Teachers

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BY

Robert L. Baker

APPROVED	DATE
<u>Warren R. Baller</u>	<u>May 20, 1955</u>
<u>W. J. Arnold</u>	<u>May 20, 1955</u>
<u>Charles O. Neidt</u>	<u>May 20, 1955</u>
<u>Arthur A. Hitchcock</u>	<u>May 20, 1955</u>
<u>Winona M. Perry</u>	<u>May 20, 1955</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This is an investigation of the differential characteristics of guidance and non-guidance workers in the understanding of human behavior. The aim of this study is to determine whether there is any significant difference between guidance and non-guidance workers in their interpretation of human behavior and in their making of plans related thereto.

To achieve such a determination it is necessary that a valid means of appraising ability to understand human behavior be found. For the present purpose a "case-study" type instrument was selected and will be modified for use in connection with the major design of the study. The experimental group of educators then will be confronted with the modified device and asked to respond to it. It is intended that the responses made by the members of each sample (guidance workers and teachers) will be analyzed on the basis of the resulting pattern of responses. By utilizing "profiles" of scores the investigator is able to compare the responses made by the two samples in terms of their interrelatedness rather than on the basis of single score mean differences between samples.

Background of the Study

Student personnel work as it is defined today has developed over a period of about thirty-five years. Throughout this period the objectives and scope of guidance services have changed considerably, as new problems have confronted the school and new responsibilities have been assumed by it. As such developments occur continuous evaluation is needed to show us where our efforts have succeeded and where improvements can be made.

One of the most important developments that has taken place is the increasing awareness of certain distinctive qualifications that prospective guidance personnel must have in order effectively to carry out the responsibilities of their office. These guidance worker qualifications are dealt with in the literature under one or more of the following categories: 1) knowledge of facts and principles pertinent to techniques of guidance and counseling; 2) personal characteristics; and 3) professional competence resulting from the ability to apply facts and principles in professional situations.

Not many years ago it was thought that "a great mother heart" was the sole requisite of the guidance worker. This attitude encouraged a certain contempt for the need of training in the techniques of guidance and counseling. The attention to techniques and competences is of very recent

date. Williamson (63) feels that since guidance is psychological in nature, the guidance worker needs certain facts and principles to guide him in his task. He should know the field of psychology so well that he can recognize the signs that point to human adjustment or maladjustment. He should have developed the habit of looking behind surface conditions and have learned to be suspicious of popular explanations of erratic behavior. This training should have convinced him that scientific methods are more likely to provide dependable data than application of impressions, estimates or common sense.

Finally, Williamson believes that the guidance person must learn that all principles involved are limited to certain specific and restricted conditions and that these conditions must be identical before the principles can be applied. However, while measurement methods may provide a dependable basis for diagnosis, the counselor must recognize the limits and weaknesses of methodology and apply safeguards.

Wrenn (68:177) feels that a more important factor in the guidance process than any of the techniques and procedures used is the nature of the guidance worker himself. The guidance worker is a factor or an instrument in the guidance process whose importance cannot be over-emphasized.

It is he who determines whether the emphasis is upon the immediate decision or upon student understanding, who diagnoses skillfully or not, who

conducts the interview at a certain level of skill, who utilizes environmental resources wisely or not at all.

Increasingly there has been recognition in modern education of the importance of sound understanding of human behavior and development. Especially is it deemed necessary that persons who hold guidance responsibilities be sensitive to human motivations and individual differences, and the relationship which these have to the planning and conducting of guidance services. In this connection the guidance worker must be one who possesses a high degree of self-knowledge. With heightened self-insight, the guidance worker can become more sensitive to himself as a psychological instrument, can utilize his counseling assets, and can minimize the influence of those qualities of his personality that militate against good guidance relationships (66).

The gradual development of thinking and practice in the educational guidance area indicates that while knowledge of facts and principles is indeed an important requisite the personal characteristics of the guidance worker and his ability to apply facts and principles in a professional situation are of equal importance for "professional competence". If the competence of the guidance worker is not given top consideration the keystone to the guidance program arch falls out. This is the main thought behind the present study.

Our present day college curricula include courses in the area of guidance and counseling which afford the prospective guidance worker the special training and experience which it

felt that he needs before he can assume guidance responsibilities in the school. But there is a question whether the abilities which follow from such training and experience are measurable, and if measurable whether they will be found to be different in guidance workers from what they are in non-guidance workers. Presumably the better these abilities can be measured the more effective will be the methods of selecting guidance personnel.

The importance of such accurate measuring devices is pointed up by Wrenn (68:197). He cites two basic reasons for "pre-training" selection of candidates for guidance and counseling preparation. First, the in-service counselor must practice on "live" subjects, therefore the subjects must be protected from exposure to untrained personnel. Second, and possibly of more importance, is the fact that the personal qualities demanded by the function of guidance and counseling cannot be supplied by training alone. If certain attributes are not present at the beginning of the professional training, the individual will not become an effective guidance worker, no matter how excellent the training program is. Training, according to Wrenn, merely sharpens the effectiveness of a personality whose structure is fairly well determined before the beginning of graduate study.

If the methods of determining whether the desired abilities are being developed in guidance trainees were

improved, the strengthening of programs of training might well be expected to follow. In an editorial comment (67) Wrenn urges immediate attention to the strengthening of professional preparation. He says that guidance and psychotherapy are being practiced by enthusiastic workers who have acquired only superficial techniques, but no real understanding of their data nor of the reliability of their practices. Wrenn points out that this is true, in large part, because the demand for guidance personnel exceeds the number of adequately trained persons.

In the above same editorial Wrenn laments the fact that very little research has been carried on in the area of determining guidance worker qualifications. The articles being published still tend to be of the descriptive and philosophical type. The goal of guidance and counseling will not have been reached until the answer to the following question is fully known. What type of counseling or guidance technique will produce what type of result in what type of person by what type of guidance worker? Simply stated the goal is to have a sufficient number of trained guidance personnel who are skilled in a wide range of therapies and who know which therapies are most likely to succeed with clearly diagnosed problems.

Burnet (12:131) also feels that very little research has been done to indicate clear guideposts for setting up selection criteria and training programs, and offers four main

areas of research which need to be considered. He believes that a clarification of the rolls and functions of the various student personnel workers needs to be made at both the high-school and college levels. Secondly, determination of the competences which are required of these people must be made in order that they may be able to do more effective work. Thirdly, a determination of how these competences can be translated into selection criteria is of great importance. In the last place, the question must be answered as to how these competences can be developed in effective training programs.

Benson and Froelich (8) have also emphasized the real need for research in the areas mentioned above. They point out that in spite of the widely assumed importance of personal characteristics of guidance workers, current certification plans seldom mention these kinds of traits as required or even desirable. The reason for this, in part at least, may be the obvious lack of experimental evidence. Research is needed to identify personal characteristics and types of training and experiences which contribute to the guidance worker's effectiveness. While it is desirable to know that there are distinctive guidance worker characteristics, there is also a need to know how they can be determined and to what extent they can serve as differentiating factors between clearly defined groups.

Need for the Study

In reviewing the literature it is apparent that better evaluation in the educational guidance area is needed, and that more effective methods (devices) than now exist must be developed before such evaluation can be accomplished. As has been indicated by Jones (35), many of the attempts are very suggestive but lack objective evidence of validity. He mentions the one by Bailey (5) in which he lists as characteristics of counselors the sympathetic understanding of youth, emotional stability, approachability, broad scope of knowledge and interests, good judgment and common sense. And Jones refers also to a statement by Cox (19) who lists guidance worker characteristics very similar to those mentioned by Bailey.

The following reasons further emphasize the real need for research in this area: first of all the writings represent merely the opinions of the people who made them; secondly, and of great importance, they do not distinguish between the guidance worker and other members of the school personnel; and last, it might well be possible that the interrelations or patterns of characteristics are more important than any single trait. (35)

Baier (4), in his article "The role of research in improving standards for counseling and guidance services", made the summary statement that research techniques should

as soon as possible play a dominant role in improving the standards for counseling and guidance services.

Recognizing the multi-fold problem which exists in this field the present study will be limited to treatment of but one of its aspects. The purpose of this study then is to appraise the ability of guidance workers and non-guidance workers to interpret human behavior and their ability to make plans related thereto in an attempt to differentiate between the two populations on the basis of resulting response patterns. If differences can be found which are significant, this evidence should be of considerable importance to those persons who are continually concerned with the selection and training of guidance personnel.

PREVIEW

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The majority of publications relating to differential characteristics of guidance and counseling personnel can be classified into the following categories: 1) descriptions of the characteristics of guidance personnel -- a philosophical treatment; 2) research related to characteristics of guidance workers; and 3) devices used in research related to characteristics of guidance workers. Certain investigations may fall somewhat outside the boundaries drawn by this classification but they will for the present purpose, be reviewed along with other studies to which they are most closely related.

Descriptive Characteristics of Guidance Workers

Although the feeling today is still that the qualifications of guidance and counseling personnel are ill-defined there has been, during the past fifteen years, considerable progress in the direction of better definitions. Especially is progress noted in the strengthening of certification standards for guidance workers. Recognition of the importance of continued progress is also reflected in the improvement of selection criteria and training programs for guidance worker applicants.

Descriptions as Implied by Certification Standards. Bailey (6) noted in 1946 that of the forty-eight states there were only four that had mandatory counseling and guidance certificates. His survey also pointed out that two other states had such certificates but did not make them mandatory. Five states had teaching certificates with a "special major" in the area of guidance and counseling; leaving thirty-seven states that had no provision for certification of personnel in the area of guidance and counseling. In 1945 MacKay (47) attempted to determine if the fundamental requirements set down by the United States Office of Education had wide application. At the time the United States Office of Education suggested the following requirements:

Counselor Certificate

A. Provisional

1. valid certificate to teach
2. two years of successful teaching
3. work experience of not less than fifty weeks in an occupation other than teaching
4. completion of twelve semester hours at an approved institution in the area of guidance and counseling

B. Permanent

1. meet all the requirements mentioned above
2. three years of successful counseling experience
3. eighteen additional semester hours

His findings indicated acceptance of the idea of certification, but not very wide application of it in practice.

By 1945 the trend was toward a sounder basis of preparation and qualification of guidance workers; but there was still more speculation than action. Benson (8), in 1948,

found that one-half of the states having certification programs issued counselor certificates even though the applicant presented no evidence of training in the principles of counseling. By 1950 such persons as Woellner (64) were popularizing the belief that it was unfortunate that the requirements were not being stated in terms of competences which would be expected of the applicant for a counselor's certificate. According to him, the courses required most frequently were the basic courses, including occupational information, counseling, tests and measurements and analysis of the individual. Even though these were the courses most frequently mentioned, their listing did not mean that the certification requirements insured a more competent guidance worker. Clayton (14) and Hall (31), in 1949 and 1950 respectively, reported that eleven states had certification requirements for counselor applicants. Clayton reported that seven states required the Master's Degree for such persons, but unfortunately a good bit of the training was so irrelevant that it unnecessarily prolonged the training period. Here again the concept of competences was prevalent in thinking.

In 1951 Kremer (39) found that twenty-three states had certification standards for school guidance workers. In reviewing the attitudes of educators in these states he found that as a group they felt that previous counseling experience should be made a requisite for guidance personnel,

more semester hours of study should be required, and all specialized study should be at the graduate level. The trend in thinking at that time showed some confusion as to exactly what should be included in the guidance worker's background, but pointed to the feeling that guidance workers might possess characteristics differing from non-guidance workers.

The returns from a 1952-1953 study by the United States Office of Education (37) showed that certification requirements for school counselors were mandatory in twenty-one states, and three territories; in eight states they were optional. Fourteen states were, at the time, developing a plan for certification or were in the process of revising present plans.

Although certification is not directly related to the problem of the present study its development as described above, does indicate the trend both of thinking and practice in connection with the qualifications of guidance persons.

Descriptions as Implied by Selection Criteria and Training Programs.

As the studies of the past ten years are reviewed it becomes increasingly apparent that the importance of the differentiating of characteristics of capable guidance workers has been recognized in the selection and preparation of guidance personnel. From a follow-up study of seventy-one recipients of advanced degrees from New York University in 1945 Warren (60) noted that the areas most frequently mentioned

as needed but not always offered in courses were: principles and techniques of guidance; tests and measurements; survey of occupations; and community resources.

In 1946 the California State Department of Education (13) recognized the importance of personal counselor qualifications and set down a descriptive list of characteristics that should be implemented in the selection and training programs:

- a. willingness to work beyond the "call of duty"
- b. consistent, friendly, approachable manner
- c. emotional stability
- d. professional development

In 1947 Jones (35) made a comparison of personal characteristics considered essential by five different authorities. Twenty-four characteristics were listed, of which only five were agreed upon by all. They were very similar to those listed by the 1946 California study.

By 1948 La Barre (42) found in his study of 271 colleges and universities that 110 offered organized programs of graduate training for guidance and counseling personnel. In that same year Simmers (57) urged that there be basic training for all guidance workers including a general emphasis on attitude, personality, social skill, philosophy of life, and core guidance courses in addition to training in specific fields.

By 1950 the number of organized training programs in colleges and universities had increased sharply. Froehlich (27) made a survey of 1010 institutions and noted the following:

1. Eighty per-cent offered training in four or fewer of the major guidance academic areas.
 - a. 792 offered courses in tests and measurements
 - b. 548 offered courses in understanding the individual
 - c. 453 offered courses in mental hygiene
 - d. 169 offered courses in counseling

2. Fewer than 100 offered courses in various of the other areas. Goheen and Ohlsen (29) found the "typical" guidance worker employed in Washington State to have a pattern of training courses similar to those mentioned by Froehlich. During this same year Robinson (55) began an attempt to bring continuity into the thinking and practices related to this matter. He made the following statement about the programs of professional education:

The student counselor must have thorough training in psychology, sociology, economics, and education if he is to understand the many factors which influence pupil behavior. He must also have thorough training in the technical skills of counseling and guidance if he is to obtain diagnostic information and put across remedial suggestions.

During the period 1950-1952 there was general recognition of the importance of such academic areas, but there was also growing evidence of a shift in practice and procedure from emphasis on semester-hours credit to the application of knowledge and the development of practical competences. This was indicated by a group of surveys (1) (65) (43) (2) in which it was reported that the most common training methods and procedures seemed to be the following: 1) role playing and psychodrama; 2) demonstration interviewing; 3) case studies; 4) recorded interviews; 5) direct counseling and

guidance practice; 6) visual aids; and 7) a group of miscellaneous but related methods and procedures. As noted by Burnett (12:128) the part of the program which includes laboratory, practicum, and internship areas has become one of the most important parts of the guidance worker's graduate training program. Williamson (62) and Embree (23) offered similar opinions.

The progress during 1951-1952 was considerable, but it was recognized that the problem of selecting and training successful guidance workers was extremely complex. The importance of research in this problem area was becoming more generally recognized. In 1954 Burnett (12:129) made the following statement:

What the best criteria for this purpose seems to be is anyone's guess, because there is no adequate research at present to indicate this information. Most colleges and universities have developed their own set of selection criteria on the basis of a common sense or "what they thought best" approach. In no case reported in the literature is there concrete evidence that any single factor or any combination is best. A list of competences must be set up through careful research. After a list of competences is established, criteria based on these competences can be used in the selection process. The next step would be validation of these criteria through various measurable techniques.

Jager (12:132) accepted Burnett's statement and further suggested that the training programs be organized around the competences which the counselors should have.

By 1952 statements by such persons as Mathewson (48) further indicated the trend toward more objective analyses