Unit 1: An Introduction to Guidance

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By studying this unit you will be able to-

- describe the meaning of guidance
- explain the nature of the guidance
- explain the purpose and principles of guidance
- identify the types of guidance

1.2 INTRODUCTION

As a teacher, one is keenly aware of the wide range of problems faced by students, both inside and outside the classroom. These problems often manifest in various ways: some students remain inattentive during classroom guidance, some show little or no response to teaching, others make very slow academic progress, and many lack concentration and motivation to study. In addition, several students experience difficulty in choosing appropriate courses or planning their future careers. Some struggle to adjust to the school environment as well as to social situations outside the classroom. At times, students may also exhibit aggressive or violent behaviour.

These problems largely arise from difficulties in students' physical, emotional,

social, moral, and spiritual adjustment. In this context, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to understand the nature and depth of the problems faced by individual students and to provide them with appropriate guidance. A sensitive and informed approach is essential to help students overcome their challenges and achieve balanced development.

Providing guidance is therefore an important function of the educational process. It aims at ensuring the holistic development of students by assisting them in identifying, understanding, and resolving their problems effectively.

In this unit, we will discuss the concept and nature of guidance. We will also briefly examine the principles and types of guidance so as to provide a clear understanding of its meaning, scope, and significance in education.

1.3 MEANING AND NATURE OF GUIDANCE

Guidance, in a general sense, refers to the process of helping an individual make appropriate decisions that enable effective problem-solving in various aspects of life. It is a systematic and purposeful process through which a person is assisted in adjusting effectively to different life situations. Guidance is an organized service aimed at helping individuals understand themselves in a comprehensive manner.

This self-understanding includes awareness of one's abilities, aptitudes, interests, tendencies, attitudes, needs, goals, and limitations. Through guidance, individuals are provided with relevant and accurate information about themselves as well as meaningful insights into the world around them. Such information enables individuals to relate their inner capacities and aspirations with external realities.

By fostering harmony between the individual's inner world and the external environment, guidance promotes emotional maturity, realistic imagination, and balanced personality development. Ultimately, the guidance process equips individuals with the knowledge and understanding required to make meaningful adjustments and informed decisions, leading to effective functioning and personal growth in various life situations. This is how the guidance process helps the individual to make meaningful adjustments to different situations in life. Ruth Strang (1966] gave a thorough definition of guidance as follows:

"Guidance is a process by which each person is helped to discover and develop their potential through self-effort."

From the above definition of guidance, four important characteristics can be seen in the guidance process.); gave a complete definition of guidance as follows:

1. This process helps a person to understand himself
2. This process helps a person to understand the relationship between themselves and others
3. This process helps the person to gain understanding in solving personal problems
4. This process helps the person to gain the understanding needed to make decisions

Jones defines guidance as follows

"Guidance is personal help given by one person to another person through this process, the person in need of assistance succeeds in shaping his life goals, adjusting, solving problems and achieving his goals."

This definition makes it clear that guidance is a personal assistance. However, guidance are sometimes given in groups, but in this case too, guidance are given individually to each member of the team. In this regard, Good is right that guidance is a dynamic interpersonal relationship that influences a person's attitude and changes the performance of subsequent behaviours.

According to the National Vocational Guidance Agency, "guidance is a systematic process through which an individual is helped to understand himself realistically and coherently. It enables a person to recognize his abilities, interests, and limitations, relate them to the realities of the world of work, and make appropriate decisions for the successful and satisfying achievement of personal and vocational goals."

Many definitions of guidance have been offered by many people an analysis of these definitions suggests the following aspects of guidance

1. Guidance helps a person to choose the most useful option for himself from among the many options
2. Problems faced by a person in different areas of life—such as academic, professional, and personal domains arise within dynamic interpersonal relationships. These problems significantly influence an individual's attitudes, perceptions, and emotional responses, and in turn affect the quality and effectiveness of subsequent behaviors and performance.

3. Helping a person to adjust properly to any situation in life.
4. Helping a person to understand themselves and their surroundings through guidance. Guidance helps a person to understand his or her latent potential, as well as the person's own level of intelligence, interests and tendencies, self-concept, values and level of maturity.
5. To develop a person's inner potential to the highest level through guidance.
6. To help a person to acquire necessary and reliable information about the world of work through guidance.
7. Guidance helps a person to give his best to the development and welfare of society.
8. To help a person live a balanced and worry-free life with complete satisfaction in any situation in life.
9. Guidance helps a person to meet the needs of his life in the most effective and efficient way.
10. Guidance helps a person to excel in life according to his skills and potential.

After discussing the various aspects regarding the concept of guidelines mentioned above, the characteristics of guidance can be marked as follows:

1 Guidance is the process of accelerating an individual's development in a self-directed direction.
2. Guidance is a process of initiating change within an individual.
3. Guidance helps the person to move forward on his own efforts.
4. Guidance helps a person to establish himself in society.
5 Guidance helps a person to build a harmonious relationship with his surroundings.
6. Guidance helps a person to make the right choices in academic, professional and personal life.
7. Guidance helps in the organization of a person's personality.

A specific structure, methodology and person (specialist) of the guidance program can be characterized as follows:

1. The guidance program involves a specific structure, methodology and personnel (experts).The guidance program includes specialist services such as testing counselling, educational and vocational employment information and follow-up services

2. Guidance is an essential program in the school system
13. Guidance helps a person to identify and develop his or her potential and talents
4. Guidance develops a positive attitude towards children
5. It helps in achieving the best development in the individual
6. Guidance helps in the development of individual skills and potential Monitoring progress

W CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Question 1: What is meant by guidance?

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Question 2: State two characteristics of guidance

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1.3.1 Purpose of the Guidance

From the above discussion, it is evident that guidance helps individuals adjust their abilities and interests in accordance with the needs of society. It facilitates personal development in a desirable direction and ensures the effective integration of individuals into society by familiarizing them with the evolving demands and challenges of a changing social environment.

At the primary school level, the purpose of guidance is to assist students in adjusting to and integrating with various primary social groups, particularly the family, school, religious institutions, and peer groups. These primary social influences play a crucial role in shaping the foundation of the learner's personality and later adolescent development.

At the secondary school level, the main objective of guidance is to support students in achieving successful self-development in areas such as educational planning, career selection, interpersonal relationships, and social adjustment. Guidance at this stage helps learners make informed and realistic choices based on their individual potentials, interests, and available opportunities.

1.3.2 Principles of Guidance

The guidance process is based on certain fundamental principles, which are outlined below:

1. Guidance is a lifelong process.

Guidance begins in childhood and continues throughout an individual's life until death. It is not limited to a particular stage, time, or place; rather, guidance services are required at different phases of life.

2. Guidance emphasizes personalization.

Guidance recognizes the uniqueness of each individual and supports the independent development of personality. Appropriate guidance is provided according to individual needs, abilities, interests, and aptitudes. At various levels of education, guidance helps individuals develop their skills, interests, and tendencies in creative and innovative ways.

3. Guidance promotes self-management and self-reliance.

Guidance assists individuals in understanding themselves and adjusting to their environment. It encourages self-direction, enabling individuals to manage their own development and become self-reliant.

4. Guidance is based on mutual cooperation.

Effective guidance requires the willing participation of the individual. No one can be forced to accept guidance; it must occur through cooperation and mutual understanding.

5. Guidance focuses on the development of individual potential.

Guidance services are meant for all individuals, as everyone possesses unique potential. However, learners who face difficulties in adjustment may require more time and intensive guidance support.

6. Guidance is a planned and systematic activity.

Guidance is not a matter of chance. It is a well-organized, purposeful, and goal-oriented activity, designed to achieve specific objectives through a systematic and coordinated programme.

7. Guidance requires professionally trained personnel.

Since guidance is a structured and coordinated process, guidance workers must have specialized training in child psychology, adolescent psychology, mental health, and practical guidance techniques.

8. Guidance respects individual differences.

Every individual is unique, and differences in abilities, needs, problems, and developmental characteristics are natural. Guidance services take these individual differences into account.

9. Guidance must be based on accurate and adequate information.

Providing guidance without sufficient and reliable information can be harmful. Therefore, guidance personnel should have comprehensive knowledge of the individual, including progress records, achievements, and background details.

10. Guidance services should be flexible.

Guidance programmes should be adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of individuals as well as society.

11. Guidance is an interrelated programme.

All aspects of an individual's life—academic, vocational, personal, and social—are interconnected. Effective guidance requires comprehensive information, even though guidance services may be organized into different areas for practical purposes.

12. Guidance upholds ethical values.

The ethical foundation of guidance lies in respecting the dignity, personality, and confidentiality of the individual receiving guidance. Services must always be delivered with sensitivity and responsibility.

1.4 TYPES OF GUIDANCE

Guidance is a **continuous and comprehensive process** that covers all aspects of an individual's life. Broadly, guidance can be classified into **three main types**:

1. Educational Guidance

Educational guidance refers to the assistance provided to an individual in his or her **academic life**. It helps a learner function smoothly within the educational system and supports continuity in learning. Through educational guidance, a person is able to **plan, organize, and manage** his or her educational programme in a mature and systematic manner. This type of guidance focuses mainly on **learning content, curriculum planning, study habits, academic difficulties, and issues related to effective learning**, enabling students to progress according to their abilities and interests.

2. Vocational Guidance

Vocational guidance helps an individual to **choose a suitable career**, prepare for it, enter the chosen occupation, and make progress in that field. It assists students in understanding the **vocational aspects of education** alongside academic subjects. Vocational guidance also helps learners become aware of their **interests, abilities, and opportunities**, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions regarding career selection and future employment.

3. Personal-Social Guidance

Personal-social guidance deals with the **social, emotional, and personal development** of an individual. It provides support in areas such as **emotional adjustment, social relationships, health-related problems, and effective use of leisure time**. This type of guidance aims to promote balanced personality development and helps individuals manage their personal and social challenges in a **self-directed and responsible manner**.

W CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Question 3: Why is Guidance a systematic and integrated service?

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Question 4: State the need for vocational guidance

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1.5 IMPORTANCE OF GUIDANCE AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

Human life is inevitably burdened with various problems; a life completely free from difficulties is unimaginable. Over time, the nature of problems may change, but problems themselves never disappear. Against this backdrop, a question often arises: *Is there any alternative?* The answer is **yes—an alternative is possible**. However, it requires the development of problem-solving skills and a positive attitude that accepts problems as an integral part of life. When individuals learn to face challenges with confidence and

courage, they are more likely to discover constructive alternatives that lead to a healthy and meaningful life.

The development of such skills and resilience does not occur automatically; **proper guidance is essential**. Therefore, there is a pressing need to establish effective guidance services at the school level to equip students with the efficiency, competence, and life skills necessary to navigate various spheres of life. School guidance plays a particularly vital role in enhancing students' academic achievement. Moreover, it contributes significantly to the development of their academic, vocational, emotional, and mental abilities.

Most importantly, guidance helps students attain an optimal level of happiness, inner peace, and emotional balance. Schools serve as crucial institutions in shaping a safe and promising future for children. Just as families transmit biologically inherited traits, schools transmit the social, cultural, and transformative values of society from one generation to the next through social heredity. To fully understand the multifaceted role of schools, they must be examined from a broad and holistic perspective. In this context, the importance of school guidance programmes becomes particularly evident.

The **importance of guidance at the school level** can be summarized as follows:

1. It helps improve students' academic achievement.
2. It encourages the development of healthy and effective study habits.
3. It helps students develop a balanced mindset that accepts success and failure as natural outcomes of life.
4. It assists in overcoming restlessness and adjustment problems at the school level.
5. It promotes a healthy environment of cooperation and constructive competition.
6. It encourages active participation in curricular and co-curricular activities.
7. It fosters collaborative efforts and a program-wide approach among teachers, students, and non-teaching staff.
8. It teaches students to use time wisely and engage in creative and meaningful leisure activities.
9. The primary purpose of school guidance is to address the emotional, social, and behavioral needs of students.
10. It introduces students to various career options and vocational pathways.
11. It ensures that family-related problems do not adversely affect students' learning processes.

12. It provides appropriate support in addressing issues such as fear, mental illness, lack of self-confidence, depression, loneliness, maladjustment to peers and the school environment, physical weakness, unhealthy sexual behavior, and substance abuse such as alcohol addiction.

2 1.6 LET US SUM UP

- Guidance helps the individual make the best choices and adjustments
- Guidance is a lifelong process and everyone needs guidance
- Guidance helps the person to make self-determination
- The purpose of guidance is to help the person integrate effectively into society taking into account the needs and skills of the person
- Guidance helps the person to move in the right direction
- Guidance workers need special preparation to provide guidance services
- Guidelines always respect individual differences
- Guidance is an interrelated programme. You can't look at a person's problem alone. There are many aspects to a problem
- Guidance can be divided into three main types – academic, vocational and personal-social guidance
- Guidance also covers the field of individual recreation and collective guidance.

O 1.7 FURTHER READING

1) Sharma, R.A. Fundamentals of Guidance and Counseling. Meerut: R. Lal Book Depot.
2) Deka, Birendra (2012], Comprehensive Education, Guwahati: Ashok Book Stall
3) Goswami, Marami (2015], New Pedagogy, Guwahati: Ashok Book Stall.).

K 1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Question 1: Guidance in the general sense is helping a person to make the right decisions, through which a person can solve problems faced in various aspects of life. Guidance is a process by which a person is helped to adjust properly to different situations in life.

Answer to Question 2: 1] Guidance is a process of initiating change within an individual. 2] Guidance helps the person to move forward on his own efforts.

Answer to Question 3: Guidance is not a service provided incidentally. Guidance has well-defined objectives, pre-planning and a specific approach. Therefore, guidance is always provided in a certain systematic and coherent manner.

Answer to Question 4: Vocational guidance is very important for students. For vocational guidance, it is essential to choose a subject or course, require prior preparation and choose a profession in accordance with one's interests, inclinations and skills. Vocational guidance involves the future economic life of the student. Therefore, vocational guidance is essential and necessary for students.. Guidance is a process of initiating change within an individual.

1.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A] Short question (write answer in 100 words]

Question 1 What is meant by Guidance?

Question 2 'Guidance is a lifelong process' why?

Question 3 What is the main purpose of academic Guidance?

B] Essay questions (write answers in 300-500 words]

Question 1 Discuss the practical aspects of the guidelines in the context of your school

Question 2 What are the learning aspects from the features of Guidance?

Question 3 Briefly discuss the types of Guidances

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