The beginning of 20th century in U.S. is marked as the beginning of school counselling profession as a vocational guidance movement. Jesse B. Davis is the first to provide a systematic school guidance programme. In the year 1907, Davis became the principal of a high school and encouraged all the English teachers of his school to use compositions and lessons so as to relate career interests, develop character and avoid behavioural problems.

“Father of vocational guidance” Frank Parson in 1908 established the bureau of vocational guidance so as to help and assist the young people while making transition from school to work. Since there was a rise of progressive education in schools between 1920 - 1930 so the school counselling and guidance grew. It led to the development of personal, social and moral aspect. Although many schools reacted to this movement as anti education as they thought that schools should teach only the fundamentals of education.

The term counselling is very vast and widespread; therefore it becomes a tough job to define it in a single sentence. There are

* Department of Psychology, University of Lucknow, Lucknow- 226007, (U.P.)

** Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Lucknow, Lucknow-226007 (U.P.)
several ways of defining counselling and various ways adopted by psychologists are overlapping. The term counselling is so broad that it has been used in various areas of psychology. The term counselling was first coined by Frank Parson in 1908, which was later adopted by Carl Rogers in response to the widespread prejudice in US against lay therapists. Rogers was not granted permission by the professional psychiatrists to be called as a psychotherapist. These factors led to the emergence of the term counselling. Many attempts have been over the years to define counselling. In 1997 the Governing Council of the American Counselling Association (ACA) adopted a definition of professional counselling as, “... the application of mental health, psychological or human development principles, through cognitive, affective, behavioural or systemic interventions, strategies that address wellness, personal growth, or career development, as well as pathology.” Before discussing counselling in detail, let us take a glance at the various definitions of counselling:

• Firstly, it refers to provide guidance i.e., some direction or advice as to a decision or course of action.
• Counselling is also a type of psychotherapy which helps people address and resolve their problems and work through their feelings.
• The University counselling service provides counselling on a broad range of issues, including adjusting to university life, family or relationship issues, depression, anxiety, lack of motivation and issues with faculty staff. The counselling service is free to all University of Melbourne students. The Careers Unit also offers career counselling and the Student Union Advisory Service and the Post-graduate Association also provide support and advocacy for students.
• Counselling is a process where clients are helped in dealing with their personal and interpersonal conflicts by a third party therapist.
• Counselling is provided to help the clients resolve conscious conflicts with the focus on setting goals and problem solving. A wide variety of techniques may be used including verbal communication. Counsellors assist the client to focus on constructive behaviours which will help the client reach specific goals. A counsellor’s training background may be from a variety of fields, including education, health care and psychology.

• Counselling is also a type of therapy in which a trained person listens to our problems and anxieties and advises without judging, to help us find our own answers.

• A confidential dialogue between a client and a care provider aimed at enabling the client to cope with stress and take personal decisions related to his/her life.

• Extensive one-to-one sessions carried out by especially trained staff. The aim of such sessions is to reach an informed decision.

• Advising or giving counsel to any one who is seeking help by trained person.

Counselling may also involve single individual or group of individuals. There is mostly a face to face interaction between client and the counsellor. In counselling the counsellor and client develop a healthy relationship with each other. Nelson Jones defines counselling in three ways:

• As a relationship.
• As a set of activities.
• As a psychological process under any subject or discipline.

Carl Rogers emphasized on this aspect of relationship i.e., an alliance between counsellor and client. He pointed out four conditions are sufficient for a healthy relationship and these are:

• Authenticity.
• Genuineness.
• Empathy.
• Unconditioned positive regard.

With the help of these four conditions a bond develops between the counsellor and client which help the latter to open up before the former, which in turn helps the former to understand the latter from the latter’s point of view. In Rogerian counselling no tool is a device to be used, it is “client centred counselling”. Counselling is about “change in behaviour” and not any change in personality. In behaviour school of psychology certain behaviours are encouraged to be developed with the help of positive reinforcement and vise-versa. In counselling the counsellor tries to understand the client and sometimes uses some psychological tests for this purpose.

**Counselling is different from Psychotherapy**

Taylor believes that there is a difference between counselling and psychotherapy; however Taylor along with Rogers and others did believe that line of distinction between the two becomes blurred. Although both the terms appear to be quite similar to each other and are used interchangeably by people, there is some difference between both the terms. Psychotherapy tends to be more therapeutic in nature i.e., it basically deals with pathological problems and severely disturbed individuals suffering with depression, anxiety or personality disorder while counselling deals with mildly disturbed individuals and tends to be oriented in equal measure to the past present and future of the individual. It helps in solving problems and therefore focuses less on psychopathology. Counselling tends to arise from Maslow’s humanistic approach and Roger’s client centred approach. Counsellor’s have a broad area covering basically normal social, cultural and developmental issues as well as problems associated with physical, emotional and mental disorder.

People who appoint personal counsellors get treatment with some form of behaviour approaches or therapy too which basically
comprises of psychodynamic as well as cognitive behaviour approaches. The counsellors usually integrate these aspects into process to benefit the client. Psychotherapy and counselling, both are taken to be self help techniques which encourage the individual for some change. Psychotherapy and counselling when used together represent an eclectic approach and serve as one of the best approaches when taken together.

In terms of population and settings also psychotherapy and counselling are distinguished. Population in counselling is mildly disturbed one, while, when disturbance is severe to the extent that the client is not in touch with reality e.g., schizophrenia or any other psychotic disorder psychotherapy comes into play. For psychotherapy a medical, psychiatric or clinical setting is required while it is not needed in for counselling.

Characteristics of Counselling

There are few features of counselling which should be kept in mind during the whole counselling procedure by a counsellor. These are as follow:

• **Confidentiality:** The information gathered during the counselling session is supposed to be kept strictly confidential and is not divulged at any stage without the counsellor’s written consent.

• **Voluntary:** Initiating the counselling process and to remain in it is always voluntary, no body can force.

• **Free:** The counselling services provided are free of charge so that there is no out-of-pocket expense.

When do people decide to seek Counselling

• A desire for personal growth and understanding.

• Excessive or constant worry, tension, nervousness, fear or apprehension.
• Prolonged feelings of unhappiness, withdrawal, tiredness, lack of interest in daily activities.
• Marked disturbance in eating or sleeping patterns.
• Difficulty in attention, concentration or memory.
• Feeling helpless or overwhelmed.
• Sudden shifts in mood or behaviour.
• Increased irritability or suspiciousness towards others.
• Problems in forming and maintaining relationships.
• Difficulty in getting along with peers, family or authority figures.
• Not working up to capacity at work.
• Low confidence or self-esteem.
• Homesickness or feelings of loneliness.
• Physical complaints when no medical causes can be found.
• Experiencing a crisis or stressful event in life resulting in loss or grief.
• Thinking about suicide.
• Excessive drinking or taking drugs.

Process of Counselling

• Listening effectively to what you are saying.
• Working with the client to define his/her goals with respect to his values and culture.
• Facilitate client’s untangling of thoughts, feelings and worries about a situation.
• Helps in gaining client’s own insight into how to act, think and feel.
• Teaches, shows and helps client express his/her emotions in his own way.
• Teaches, shows and helps client work out his own solutions to problems.
• Teaches, shows and helps clients in accepting what cannot be changed.
• Teaches, shows, helps and supports client and his/her relationship.
• Helps the individual become empowered to act in ways that are in his/her best interest.
• Uses a variety of different techniques to help client explore what is important to him/her.

**Counselling can broadly be classified under the following heads**
- Career Counselling
- Genetic Counselling
- Marriage Counselling
- Relationship Counselling
- Spiritual Counselling
- School Counselling
- Family Counselling
- Geriatric Counselling

**Characteristics of an Effective Counsellor**
- Have good will (are optimistic and hopeful).
- Are able to be fully present for another.
- Equalize the counselling relationship.
- Have a sense of vulnerability.
- Have self-respect.
- Are willing to model appropriate thoughts, feelings and behaviours.
- Turn mistakes into learning experiences.
- Have a sense of humour.
- Are empathetic and compassionate.
• Demonstrate patience.
• Are non-judgemental.
• Are active listeners.
• Care about the clients’ well being.

Educational Counselling

The term educational counselling has been rooted deeply with the problems and conditions of school and college going students. A major area of educational counselling basically comprises of school counselling. A school counsellor or educator is one who works in school and has historically been referred to as ‘guidance counsellor’ or ‘educational counsellor’ because he/she basically helps out the students through guiding them in their profession. Most of the schools these days appoint a career counsellor who more or less helps out the students in choosing the best suited career according to their aptitude, intelligence ability etc. The need for high school counsellor is more in demand than the school counsellors belonging to the lower grades. The main role of education counselling is bestowed upon a school counsellor. Education counselling is basically required by the school and college going students. School counsellors form an integral part of any education programme. They are certified professional educators who assist students, teachers, parents and administrators each day. The main work of a school counselling programme is to address the personal, social and academic growth and development of all the students. The major focus of an educational counsellor is to help the students achieve success in school and become responsible and productive members of society.

Licensing of Professional Educational Counsellors

The professional school counsellor is a certified and licensed educator trained in some school counselling with unique qualifications and skills to address students academic, personal, social and career development needs. According to the Council
for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a school counselling programme is supposed to meet several standards which include professional identity of school counselling viz., history, organization etc. It also includes cultural diversity courses, human development and growth along with career development. Additionally, it serves to add core components for helping relationships through consultation and counselling, group work, assessment, research and programme evaluation, knowledge and requirement for school counsellor, contextual dimensions of school counselling and foundations of school counselling. The eligibility requirement for programs that are CACREP accredited, a school counselling student must undergo 600 hours of internship under a highly qualified school counsellor.

**Framework of Educational Counsellors**

Professional school counsellors implement a comprehensive school counselling programme in order to promote and enhance student achievement through a guidance curriculum, individual planning strategies, responsive services and comprehensive school counselling programme. A fully implemented district-wise comprehensive school counselling programme meets the need of all its students. In most states professional school counsellors have a master’s degree in guidance and counselling with a specialization in school counselling. These counsellors are mainly employed in elementary, middle/junior high school and high school and in district supervisory, counsellor education and post secondary settings.

The major attention of these counsellors is focused on the developmental stages of student’s growth including the needs, tasks and the interest of the students related to those stages. Professional school counsellors mainly attend to the needs of the students and take care that these need are met in three basic domains i.e., academic development, career development and personal and social development. Knowledge, understanding and
skills in these domains are developed through classroom instructions, appraisal, consultation, counselling, co-ordination and collaboration. For example in appraisal a school can help out the students in exploring vocational needs and interests by using a variety of personality and vocational assessment methods. Classroom guidance methods are preventive in nature and include self management and self-monitoring skills. The responsive services component of the professional school counsellor’s role provides individual and/or small group counselling for students. For example, if a student’s behaviour is interfering with his or her achievement, the professional school counsellor will observe that student in a class, provide consultation to teachers and other personnel to develop (with the student) a plan to address the behavioural issue(s) and then work together (collaboration) to implement the plan. They also help by providing consultation services to family members.

Apart from this professional school counsellors may lead classroom guidance on a variety of topics within the three domains such as personal or group to address some common issues among students such as marriage, divorce, death etc. The counsellor also coordinates with the outside groups to help the students in academics or coordinate a stage programme that teaches about child abuse or drug through on stage drama.

A study conducted on The Education Trust Initiative to determine how these themes are reflected in the professional school counselling literature. House and Hayes (2002), on behalf of The Education Trust, argued that school counsellors must work to be proactive leaders who are effective collaborators in advocating for the academic success of all students. This means that school counsellor’s primary focus should be to close the achievement gap between poor students and students of colour and their more advantaged peers. House and Hayes outlined a “New Vision” for school counsellors, moving from a present focus as mental health providers to a focus on academic/student
achievement. The whole of the counselling procedure can be sub-divided under three broad heads as follows:

1. **Elementary/Primary school counselling:** Elementary professional school counsellors are set to meet the developmental need of young children. They use a variety of media such as crayons, paints, puppets, clay, children’s book and toys to facilitate this counselling procedure. The elementary school counselling career is an opportunity for Americans and Canadians who are interested in the field of play therapy versus community and private agencies. Elementary professional school counsellors also spend 35-40 per cent of their time in classroom guidance. Though not ideal, they are sometimes on a rotating schedule with “special area” teachers such as music education Music education teachers, art education Art education teachers, or physical education Physical education teachers.

2. **Middle school counselling:** In middle school Middle school counselling, the professional school counsellor typically is less engaged in classroom instruction than in Individual Planning (for high school and beyond). Individual and small group responsive services (e.g., counselling) continue. Middle school counsellors must address the social/emotional issues that arise among this age group, especially peer pressure, bullying, depression and academic challenges. Also, the counsellor usually spends time on vocational exploration and assessment with seventh and eighth grade students as they prepare for high school.

3. **High school/Secondary school counselling:** In high school High school, the American professional school counsellor continues to provide responsive services and provides fewer classroom guidance strategies. The high school counsellor provides large group guidance units and lessons on post-secondary options. For example, the high school counsellor helps students prepare for post-
secondary education and/or training options (*e.g.*, college College trade college, school Trade school) by engaging students in finding accurate and meaningful information on entrance requirements, financial aid Financial aid, recommendation letters, test-preparation and so forth. Professional school counsellors at the high school level spend much of their time helping students monitor their progress toward graduation and being adequately prepared for post-secondary options. While some high school counsellors spend time developing the school’s class schedule, this is considered a non-guidance task and takes valuable time away from direct work with students.

Therefore, broadly counselling may help people to understand their self and others in a better way. It also helps them to think and seek things positively in the matters of their concern. Besides this it helps in enhancing relationships with others and also makes communication more effective. It helps in coping up with stressful and unwanted situations more effectively by developing better strategies for problem solving. An individual can maintain balance in work, family and personal life and can therefore make better decisions and set out realistic goals in life. The school counsellors basically help students make decisions that affect their personal and academic development. They even provide drug- and alcohol-abuse rehabilitation or conflict resolution sessions. They meet with students individually or in groups.

As mentioned above Counsellors who work in junior and senior high schools help students choose courses that will affect their later careers. Those who plan to learn trades, for instance, may need technical classes. If students wish to attend college, counsellors advise them on both their academic and extra curricular activities. They also provide students with scholarship information, training manuals and college catalogues. Counsellors in elementary schools work mainly with students who disrupt classrooms or are physically handicaps. Therefore, it can be denied that the importance of counsellor’s especially at educational and school level cannot be avoided.
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