

Guidance Counselor's Role in Special Education Students (SPED) Performance Toward a Guidance Needs Assessment Program

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Abstract

This study explores the role of guidance counselors and their impact on the social skills of Special Education (SPED) students, focusing on counselors' practices and demographic profiles. The demographic profile of respondents includes age, gender, highest educational attainment, years of working experience, and years of training. The study evaluates the extent of guidance counselors' practices in academic support, socio-emotional support, and advocacy, assessing their effectiveness through teachers' perceptions. Findings reveal that guidance counselors' practices are commendable, with mean scores of 4.00 in academic support, 4.10 in socio-emotional support, and 4.14 in advocacy, indicating strong engagement in their roles. The analysis of SPED students' social skills shows that 43.1% exhibit high social skills, 25.86% possess very high social skills, 27.59% have average social skills, and 3.45% display low social skills. This distribution underscores the varying levels of social competence among SPED students, highlighting the need for tailored interventions. Statistical analysis reveals a significant difference in the guidance counselors' role practices when grouped by educational attainment and work experience, with P-values of 0.01665 and 0.04809, respectively. This suggests that counselors' educational background and experience influence their practice, necessitating differentiated support strategies. Furthermore, a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.2621$, $P = 0.04695$) between the practices of guidance counselors and the social skills of SPED students indicates an inverse relationship, which may be attributed to various contextual factors. The study concludes that guidance counselors play a crucial role in supporting SPED students' academic and socio-emotional development. However, the inverse relationship between counselors' practices and students' social skills warrants further investigation. Based on the findings, the study recommends professional development programs for teachers to enhance their skills in career counseling, academic planning, and tailored support for diverse educational profiles and work experiences.

Keywords: Roles, Practices, Social Skills, Guidance Counselors, SPED students