

RESEARCH NEEDS RELATED TO GUIDANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

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INTRODUCTION—

Attempting to assess the needs of any profession is always hazardous. In this instance it is made even more hazardous by the fact that the assessment is being made on the basis of only a cursory knowledge of what has transpired in this field on a national scale. Nonetheless the assessment offered is based on observations, discussions, and conversations entered into over a period of exposure to the Philippine situation of less than a year while fulfilling the responsibilities of a Fulbright lecturer and consultant.

A basic premise that underlies the research needs to be offered here rests on the understanding that education as a discipline draws from a wide variety of fields of its fund of knowledge. This is most especially true of the profession of guidance. In order for the educational and guidance processes to be most effective and meet the demands of a particular society and culture, the resources of anthropology, sociology, and psychology as well as other disciplines are of immense importance. The knowledge available through work in these fields provides the basis for much that we do and many of the methods which are employed. Their contributions cannot be underestimated.

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT —

For the most part, the educational enterprise is premised on the results of an understanding of the influential factors in the development of American children and adolescents. Environmental and psychological concomitants of the American child's circumstance have tended to be the guiding force which undergirds the views held of the Fil-

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ipino child. A logical viewpoint would suggest that there is a need for effective research in this area to ascertain if those commonly held view are appropriate.

The average Filipino child is very unlikely to grow up in an environment and in a psychological atmosphere similar to that of the typical American child. Observation alone suggests that there is a vast difference in these circumstances. Investigation of these factors would undoubtedly produce evidence showing a vastly different set of features that exert a force on the growing, developing child.

Research should be begun on an extensive basis to find those ingredients which shape and determine the typical childhood and adolescent behavior. Is it typical for Filipino children to engage in group activities? At what age does such group functioning begin? What explicit elements of group activity tend to have the most far-reaching effects? To what extent do the varying child-rearing practices have a profound influence on the behavioral aspects of the child, and later the adolescent? What are the most significant of such child-rearing practices? These are just a few of the questions which might reasonably be proposed as needing answers—such answers may have a significantly pertinent relevance on the methods and techniques employed in education.

SOCIETAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES—

Research efforts in the realm of understanding more thoroughly the societal and cultural influences that prevail and thus determine the manner in which the Filipino's cognitive style is exhibited are most desirable. Kinship arrangements could be considered to have a dramatic influence on the behavior of the individual. The respective roles of the male and female in society, in the family, and in various occupations, all become of great importance as areas for exploration. The information to be obtained has much relevance for those whose responsibility it is to work with children and adolescents. The recognition of what research can provide will have an effect on the educational

programs considered most essential in meeting the needs of Filipino society. Furthermore it provides a rationale for establishing appropriate goals for the future.

It would appear that there is much to be done in this area of human behavior. It is with the knowledge acquired through appropriate research in this area that reasonable outlines for mental health may be established; it provides a basis for measuring the deviate and the "normal" individual. The information to be garnered from studies in the social-cultural realm aid in better understanding the predominant attitudes, values and mores which exist, thus the ultimate value of this data is to be found, with reasonable application, in better setting the goals for education. Further, it has meaning for research in related areas.

PERSONALITY RESEARCH—

There is a basic understanding that the myriad features of personality are an outgrowth of the attitudes and values which predominate in society and in the culture, coupled with the manner in which the family interprets those attitudes and values in its own particular setting. Thus, the research suggested previously must be intimately tied to research in personality.

It has been observed that there is a great need for much data on the personality of the Filipino. Some efforts have been made, yet much remains to be done. This research must be accompanied by a formulation of theory from which research may be based. Predominant theories of personality development themselves are grounded in the social-cultural factors that prevail in any major global setting. It has been contended that the theoretical formulations of Freud regarding personality dynamics are not as pertinent today in western culture as they once were. If this contention has basis in fact, then no less can be said of the transplanting of personality theory from the western scene to the Philippines. Thus theory and research, based on that theoretical base, is urgently needed if educators and guidance workers are to provide the type of setting that benefits the whole child.

VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—

One of the most profound needs in education and guidance, and subsequently a matter of great value to the Philippine economy, is the necessity of research in the area of vocational development. At the present time there is a dearth of information relevant to such questions as — How does the child, and later the adolescent, develop his vocational goals? What factors are most influential in the development of occupational values and objectives?, To what extent does the present economy restrict the prospective of vocational goal-setting by today's youth?, What are the paramount factors in the social structure that dictate the avenues to vocational goal achievement?

Vocational perspective needs to be thoroughly understood so that the educational process can take a realistic direction and be of greatest assistance to youth. The need for technical and skilled workers and the discouraging extent to which such occupations are viewed with disdain by so many young people, warrants serious study with the aim of finding ways in which this problem may be effectively counter-balanced by elevating the status of such occupations.

Intensive research devoted to better knowledge of the complexities of the occupational structure which predominates would enable educators and guidance personnel to plan learning experience which would have far greater meaning to students. Further, it would provide the informational resources guidance people need to effectively assist students in making realistic vocational choices.

In all, the availability of vocational data would appear to be extremely sparse. The necessity for research in this area, and related research in the area of interests and other factors pertaining to vocational development, is vitally needed. Progress toward a more comprehensive educational program to meet the needs of all children will be impaired to the degree that there is a lack of empirical

data upon which to base decisions regarding educational needs.

STANDARDIZED EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS—

The plethora of American developed tests that are utilized in Philippine education would seem to be a serious detriment in fully understanding the Filipino child. American-made tests, constructed on the basis of American educational standards and cultural values, may logically be presumed to be most inappropriate for use here.

This situation calls for drastic research measures to develop educational and psychological tests suitable to the Philippine environment and psychological setting. There is a most urgent need to engage in test research and evaluation. Education is seriously in need of tests which can be realistically applied to the students of this social-cultural milieu.

Research in the development and standardization of both educational and psychological measurements of all kinds needs rapid and intense effort. The replacement of tests developed in other cultures by Philippine tests can have significant ramifications on the educational system. For the greater advancement of this segment of Philippine life, no more urgent need exists.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION IN GUIDANCE—

The last, but certainly not the least important area of research to be proposed, pertains to the field of guidance, itself. It appears that this professional field has been adopted without a full appreciation for the need to analyze the particular manner in which guidance might effectively operate on the Philippine educational scene.

The direction of research here should be to empirically assess the most outstanding needs of students; to determine student perspective of guidance; and to ascertain the basic needs they feel are most predominant. Another direction that is essential for research is to evaluate the level of performance of counselors. As a corollary research direction, there is the investigation of necessary

training standards and the implicit need to assess course content. The quality of the professionally trained counselor is dependent on the standards of training and the particular subject-matter which forms a part of that training. Youth deserve the best that can be provided, and this entails assuring those who enter this field that their preparation measures up to the needs of the tasks they are about to undertake.

Evaluative research and research into the manner in which guidance can most effectively serve youth is a fundamental need in the growth of this profession. It behooves every counselor to encourage and to participate in research aimed at raising the level of professionalism. This vital requirement can be fulfilled, in part, by counselors themselves entering into research projects in their individual settings. The need is great — it rests on counselors themselves to initiate this research.

CONCLUSION—

Within a short resume, an attempt has been made to briefly express what are observed to be some pronounced research efforts which must be undertaken. The quality, the vitality of education are dependent on such activity. And the subsequent benefit will extend beyond the educational area to affect all facets of Philippine life.

As a final commentary, it should be emphasized that above all else, whether there is agreement with what has been proposed or not, the prevailing concern for research in education exists. The flame of intellectual pursuit is kindled by research, and it deserves the most earnest support possible.