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## **AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF COUNSELING PRACTICES IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF PAKISTAN AND DEVELOPING A MODEL STRATEGY FOR FUTURE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of present study was to analyze the existing counseling practices available in the universities of Pakistan, on the basis of opinions of such stakeholders as teachers and students of the university so as to suggest a model counseling strategy for the future. The objectives of the study were: (a) to examine the views of students and teachers of the universities for assessment of counseling needs and their utilization in these institutions of higher learning (c) to analyze the counseling practices in universities of Pakistan (d) to develop a model counseling strategy to be used in the universities of Pakistan in future. The hypotheses of the study were that there was significant trend of opinion among the university students about counseling practices in their universities and there was significant trend of opinion among the university teachers about counseling practices in their universities. For quantitative part, the sample of study consisted of 550 students, 110 teachers. Cluster sampling technique was used for the study. The data was collected by using three self developed questionnaires (Likert Scale). The quantitative data were analyzed by applying Chi-square. On the basis of the findings of quantitative and qualitative data, the main conclusions of the study were drawn i.e. according to the students, the counseling services are essential and beneficial at university level, because this is the right time where students are looking for proper guideline for their career their career opportunities/career selection. The result of this study indicated that teachers of university departments were in agreement with the opinion of students. They highlighted that unspecialized persons were providing the counseling services in universities instead of professionally qualified counselors, whose services were much required. According to university students, they did not have adequate counseling services due to nonexistence of the post of counselor in their university. Instead, the front desk helpers, teachers and administrators provided the requisite information about programs and subjects to them. The key recommendations of the study include that the appointment of counselors in the educational institutions will assist students to achieve the goals of personal, social and academic competency and become capable to be employed in the jobs they have been prepared for. The study has proposed a model counseling strategy to be adopted in the universities of Pakistan, comprising of five components: Organizing, Planning, Designing and Implementation and evaluating. It is envisaged that policy makers, government officials, researchers, counselors, students and other stakeholders will be benefited from this study in planning, reviewing and implementing the counseling services and resultantly making this process result oriented and cost-effective.

## INTRODUCTION

A guide encourages the understudies in the zones of scholastic accomplishment, individual/social development, and profession improvement, guaranteeing that understudies become dynamic and balanced grown-ups of tomorrow. He/she gives important help to understudies, whether or not they work in the school or past creates sensible intercessions by tuning in to the necessities of understudies, gives transient gathering directing, encourages teenagers to comprehend their social, passionate and scholastic issues and helps understudies in defining reasonable life objectives. Unique obligations of a guide were to exhort understudies in settling on vocation related choices, help understudies in the selection of courses, projects, and administrations identified with situation exercises. With the commencement of human life as a zygote, development and improvement get numerous progressions the body. Be that as it may, some formative phases of life have profound outcomes and pre-adulthood is one such time of life. It is a period of 'fast physical, enthusiastic, intellectual, and social turn of events'. Exploration concentrates from the Western world gauge that as high as 18% of teenagers experience the ill effects of despondency and the proportion of young ladies experiencing wretchedness is practically twofold than young men (Gibson, 2005).

Because of absence of sufficient examination concentrates in the Pakistani setting, it is hard to evaluate the pervasiveness of despondency. Be that as it may, one deliberate audit cautiously refers to commonness of sorrow at 34% in the general populace of Pakistan (Mirza, 2004).

Pre-adulthood actually signifies 'to develop into development' is started by pubertal changes in young men and young ladies from the age of 11. Specialists contend that both physiological and social elements add to these changes. Physiological changes at pubescence, remembering development for privates and presence of auxiliary sexual qualities, are brought about by hormonal changes. Changes, for example, monthly cycle in young ladies and nighttime outflow in young men make unsettling influence in their lives, dread and disengagement. Since these progressions are more sensational in its belongings in females than in guys, all things considered, females have all the more testing time in re-acclimation to this new period of life.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Direction and advising administrations have not been set up out in the open and private universities in Pakistan. These administrations were intended to help understudies to build up their scholastic, social and individual skills so as to settle on reasonable decisions and applicable choices throughout everyday life. Be that as it may, this appear not to have been acknowledged since there were perceptible understudies' unsettling influences that frequently appear as unrests, helpless companion connections, wastage of time, helpless investigation propensities, substance misuse and trouble in adapting to assessment tension. Subsequently, pain, misery and despondency have become an integral part of understudies' life in the college. The specialists were stood up to with the understudies' social, scholastic and individual modification challenges. This investigation looked to break down the guiding needs, rehearses and their usage in universities of Pakistan as

saw by Students and Teachers of the Departments and building up a model advising methodology to be actualized in future at universities level.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study were:

1. To examine the views of Students and Teachers of the universities for assessment of counseling needs and their utilization in these institutions of higher learning.
2. To analyze the counseling practices in universities of Pakistan.
3. To develop a model counseling strategy to be used in the universities of Pakistan in future.

## **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

In order to achieve study objectives No 1 and 2, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

H<sub>1</sub>: There was significant trend of opinion among the university Students about counseling practices in their universities.

H<sub>2</sub>: There was significant trend of opinion among the university Teachers about counseling practices in their universities.

The above research hypotheses were tested through the following null hypotheses:

H<sub>01</sub>: There was no significant trend of opinion among the university Students about counseling practices in their universities.

H<sub>02</sub>: There was no significant trend of opinion among the university Teachers about counseling practices in their universities.

## **METHODOLOGY**

It is a cross sectional study. It involves research activities, ranging from wide review of the related literature. Data was collected through self developed questionnaires and semi structured interview guide. Thirty-two self developed questionnaire items were constructed for Students to analyze the need and availability of counseling services for students in universities of Pakistan. Fifty –two self developed questionnaire items were developed for Teachers to identify the need of counseling services in universities.

### **Population**

All Students and Teachers of Departments of 25 public/private universities located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi were population of the study. Therefore, the population of the study consisted of 834323 Students and 15867 Teachers of Departments from all universities situated in Rawalpindi and Islamabad cities. The total population size of this study was 850190 respondents.

### **Sample**

The sample of the study consisted of twenty-two universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad cities of Pakistan. The sample of the study consisted of 550 Students, 110 Teachers of Departments. Total sample size was 660.

For quantitative analysis, cluster sampling technique was used for the Teachers and Students taken from each university. The Students studying at Masters and Graduate/Bachelor levels in public and private universities and both the genders were taken as sample of the study.

### Pilot Testing

Self developed questionnaires and semi structured interview guide were tried out on the Students and Teachers of Departments of three universities, excluded in the sample, to check the validity and reliability of the research instruments. For pilot testing, out of 25 universities, three universities were randomly selected. Respondents as 05 Students and 05 Teachers of Department were picked from each university to check the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Total sample size for pilot testing was 30 respondents.

### Reliability of the Instruments

After developing the questionnaires and semi structured interview guide, those were discussed with educationists, experts, Heads of Departments of universities, principals and psychologist for obtaining their opinions and to check reliability of the instruments. In quantitative analyses, Reliability co-efficient was 0.711 for Students', 0.822 for Teachers' questionnaires. In qualitative analyses, according to the suggestions of the expert and consultation of the supervisor the overlapping questions were merged and finalized in to fourteen interview guide questions.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The investigation included computation, organization and application of Chi-square test to the quantitative information taken from closed questions. The Chi square was calculated both manually and electronically through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to demonstrate the noteworthiness of the result at 0.05 level of significance.

### RESULTS

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data, as tabulated below:

#### QUANTITATIVE DATA (STUDENTS' RESPONDENTS)

**Table 4.1:** *The perception of students about the provision of regular post and recruitment of counselor in the university (N= 550)*

Yes		No		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%		
13	2.3	537	97.6	499.21	<.000

df=1 X<sup>2</sup> at 0.05= 3.341

As shown in the above table 4.1, 97.6 percent students told that they did not have the provision of a regular post of a counselor in their university. The value of chi square (499.21) was highly statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was a significant trend of students' opinion towards the non- availability of regular post of counselor in their university.

**Table 4.2: The perception of students about who is responsible for providing the counseling services in their university (N= 550)**

HODs		Administrators		Student Advisors /Affairs		Faculty Members		Subject Teachers		Front Desk Helpers		X <sup>2</sup>	P
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
18	3.2	111	20.18	88	16	66	12	105	19	162	29.4	126.4	<.000
df=5											X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05= 11.07		

As shown in the above table 4.2, 29.4 percent students informed that front desk helpers, 20.18 percent students held that administrators and 19 percent students held that subject teachers were responsible for providing counseling services in their university. The value of chi square (126.4) was statistically highly significant at 0.05 level. This means there was visible trend of students' perception towards providing student the counseling services in the universities by front desk helpers, administrators and subject teachers of the universities.

**Table 4.3: The perception of students that the counseling services enable students to be well disciplined with improved academic performance (N= 550)**

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
18	3.3	49	8.9	357	64.9	126	22.9	512.17	<.000
df =3								X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05= 7.815	

As shown in table 4.3, 64.9 percent students agreed and 22.9 percent students strongly agreed that counseling services enable students to be well disciplined with improved academic performance. The value of chi square (512.17) was statistically highly significant at 0.05 level which means that there was significant trend of opinion among students', that counseling services enable students to be well disciplined with improved academic performance.

**Table 4.4: The perception of students that due to counseling practices there were likely to be less personal problems among the students in the university (N= 550)**

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
6	1.1	83	15.0	353	64.1	108	19.6	491.43	<.000
df =3								X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05= 7.815	

Table 4.4 describes that, 64.1 percent students agreed and 19.6 percent students strongly agreed that due to counseling practices, there were likely to be less personal problems among students in

the university. The value of chi square (491.43) was highly statistically significant at 0.05 level which shows significant trend of opinion among students' that there were likely to be less personal problems among students in the university.

**Table 4.5: The perception of students that counseling services may be provided to students by their teachers (N= 550)**

Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
96	17.4	352	64	89	16.1	13	2.3	76.74	<.000

df =3 X<sup>2</sup> at 0.05= 7.815

The above table 4.5 explains that, 64 percent students disagreed and 17.4 percent students strongly disagreed that counseling services could be provided by their teachers. The value of chi square (476.74) was highly significant at 0.05 level which means that there was significant trend of opinion among students that counseling services may not be provided by their teachers whenever needed in the universities.

### QUANTITATIVE DATA (TEACHERS' RESPONDENTS)

Following are the tables contain data from teacher respondents through structured questionnaire.

**Table 4.6: The perception of teachers that session for counseling in the university for the students be held once a week in a month? (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%		
33	30	77	70	17.60	<.000

df=1 X<sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841

As revealed in the above table 4.66, 70 percent teachers did not agree that counseling services are provided once a week every month. The value of chi square (17.60) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was noticeable trend of teachers' perception that counseling services be provided once a week in a month in their university.

**Table 4.7: The perception of teachers that counseling session be held in the university twice a week in a month (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>		
88	80	22	20	39.60	<.000
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	

As shown in the above table 4.67, 80 percent teachers held that counseling practices be provided in the university twice a week in a month. The value of chi square (39.60) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was noticeable trend in teachers' perception that counseling be provided twice a week in a month in university.

**Table 4.8: The perception of teachers that session for counseling in the university be held for the students (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>		
31	28.1	79	71.8	20.94	<.000
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	

The above table 4.68 describes that, 71.8 percent teachers did not agree that session for counseling in the university for the students be conducted every week in a month. The value of chi square (20.94) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was visible inclination of teachers' that counseling sessions in the university be carried out every week in a month.

**Table 4.9: The perception of teachers about parents' participation during the counseling sessions (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>		
46	41.8	64	58.2	22.66	<.000
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	



As shown in the above table 4.69, 58.2 percent teachers did not agree that parents should participate in counseling sessions. The value of chi square (22.66) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there were visible inclinations of teachers' disagreement with the idea that parents should participate in the counseling sessions.

**Table 4.10: The perception of teachers about using classroom for counseling sessions (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%		
45	40.9	65	59.1	3.63	<.057
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	

As shown in the above table 4.70, 59.1 percent teachers did not agree that classroom be used for counseling purposes but 40.9 percent teachers agreed to this idea. The value of chi square (3.63) was statistically non significant at 0.05 level. This means that teachers' view on the usage of classrooms for counseling sessions was divided.

**Table 4.11: The perception of teachers about their involvement in the counseling session with the fresh admission students in the university (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%		
71	64.5	39	35.4	9.30	<.002
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	

As shown in the above table 4.71, 64.5 percent teachers agreed that teachers should be involved in counseling with the new students in the university. The value of chi square (9.30) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was visible inclination in teachers' opinion that as a teacher should have communication session with the new students in their university.

**Table 4.12: The perception of teachers about the usage of motivational audiovisual aids during the counseling sessions (N=110)**

Agree		Disagree		X <sup>2</sup>	p
n	%	n	%		
82	74.5	28	25.4	26.50	<.000
df=1				X <sup>2</sup> at 0.05 = 3.841	

As exposed in the above table 4.72, 74.5 percent teachers agreed that audiovisual aids be used for motivation purposes during the counseling sessions. The value of chi square (26.50) was statistically significant at 0.05 level. This means that there was visible trend of teachers' inclination towards the use of audiovisual aids for motivational purposes during the counseling sessions.



## CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the above findings:

According to university Students, they didn't have sufficient directing administrations due to the non-presence of the post of the advocate in their universities. Rather, the front work area aides, educators give the imperative data about projects and subjects to them. Notwithstanding, they felt that advising administrations can't be adequately given by the non-experts. The Students were persuaded that they would have less close to home and scholastic issues if word related direction and vocation guiding were given to them. Understudies' own, social and scholastic ability relies on the university instructor who works with unmistakably characterized objectives and expected set of responsibilities and who helps out employees, HODs and different partners as a group to advance understudies' administration characteristics. By filling in as a contact between the gatherings in higher training, the guide likewise turns into a powerful backer of the understudies and improves his/her own adequacy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of conclusions and discussion, the following recommendations are made further research.

1. The post of a counselor be created in every institution for higher education so that the students are provided with counseling, relevant to the subjects and careers of their interest.
2. Counselors may be employed in universities to guide the students at time of admissions. Counselors may also support the teaching process in classrooms.
3. That those in guidance and counseling accept the responsibility for continued professional development. The counselor should make every effort to meet the standards set for certification, and staff members should take advantage of the in-service training programs and guidance courses offered at the universities.
4. Counselors may organize and conduct large group sessions in the areas of career choices and other allied areas. Other members of the guidance team, including teachers and administrators, may also be involved in organizing and conducting these sessions.
5. A counseling committee composed of teachers, administrators, and counselors be appointed in the individual university to serve in determining the policies, making specific proposals and plans, and directing the guidance program in general. These should be chosen according to their interests, abilities, and training.

## MODEL COUNSELING STRATEGY

In order to initiate an effective counseling programme in universities of Pakistan, a counseling model is suggested here that was reviewed in chapter two. It contains five stages, namely, organizing, planning, designing, implementing and evaluating. This model is suggested in the light of the findings of this study as well as independent of the study findings and recommendations.

**1. Organizing:** In this stage, two decisions are required to be made, that is, commitment to act and identification of leadership.

At this process of change, university management should be committed and involved. Those who may be affected by this process of change should also be involved. The change process must be led by those have investment in the counseling programme. A steering committee should also be formed in order to supervise the change process. The steering committee should consist of members who belong to the counseling function, business, community, students' representation and university administration.

**2. Planning:** In this stage of planning, the following activities are recommended. Comprehensive model of counseling programme is adopted and programme development process is used by selecting the appropriate model and identifying the relevant content for including in the programme. The model must include learning to live(personal and social development),learning to learn( academic development) and learning to work(career development).The four components that make the overall service delivery system be understood. These components are counseling curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and system support. To assess the current programme for development means making actual design, setting priorities, and making the required resources available for the programme. The programmed should be assessed based on allocation of resources for the four components and the priorities in these four components. The collection of this data helps in assessing current allocation of resources to bring about the required improvements. The data collection and analysis may be the activity review, conducting activities, type of clients served, counselor's time allocation, job description, budget, material and equipments, facilities etc. The planning process also includes developing the mission statement in terms of types of clients to be served, programmes offered, contents of these programmes and programme delivery system. The mission statement also includes giving the philosophy for such counseling programme and the basic assumptions related to the programme.

**3. Designing:** The first major activity at this stage is to establish the overall design. An initial assessment of local conditions such as university and its students must be made; the desired programme should be defined appropriately in terms of qualitative and quantitative data. In qualitative terms, components (expression of priorities), contents (objectives, grade based priorities), population (nature of students and other parties student categories, staff conditions), staff roles (staff and their competencies) activities (format of overall activities). In quantitative terms the information such as the scope, size students and resources must be described, philosophical priorities should be established because resources are limited and there is a mismatch between requirements and resources. Therefore, priorities will help in better allocation of resources. Other activities at designing stage are developing the programme standards and planning the transition to the desired programme. The standards provide the job responsibilities of the counseling staff which should be appeared by the concerned administration and disseminated to counselors and other staff .While planning the transition to desired programme, the existing programme is compared with desired programme by examining different aspects of new programme such as counselors' time, number of students served and competencies addressed. Finally, at this stage a master plan be developed for implementation of change. It includes all key

tasks required to implement the counseling programme and the human and financial resources required to bring changes.

**4. Implementing:** This stage is more crucial and critical when the adopted programme now is put into practice and deals with the issues from staff and other parties. During this stage, the administration, teaching staff and other supporting staff should play their role. In addition, standards should be developed for using the resources such as privacy equipments and instructions. The new programme should be supervised by well trained professional supervisors. During implementation, counselor to student ratio must be calculated, counselor's workload should be determined and non-counseling duties should be taken away from him/her. Based on the new priorities, new activities be developed and implemented which should be well planned. The new activities be written for counselors as counseling strategies and standards for students.

**5. Evaluating:** This is the process which judges how far the counseling programme achieves its objectives. Evaluation is used for making decisions and recommends actions to improve the whole programme. As an ongoing activity, it may continue in all stages of programme development. The counselor plays main role in the whole guidance and counseling programme. Counselor's evaluation is also crucial in making an effective evaluation of the whole programme. The purpose of counselor's evaluation is towards continuous growth of the counselor. There are various appropriate techniques but there should be flexibility in counselor evaluation programme which should allow the needs of students and broadening their scope. The counselor's evaluation is based on job description and ethical standards. As environmental changes are always occurring, they should be given appropriate training at regular intervals in order to keep them up-to-date. Counselors' performance be evaluated against the implementation of the counseling programme. If the support of administrative staff is not available to the counselor, he/she may not be able to implement the programme.

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