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Need Assessment for Guidance and Counseling of Students at the University Level- A case of University of Loralai

Abstract: The present study investigates the guidance and counseling needs of students at the University of Loralai, focusing on personal, educational, and placement-related challenges. A sample of 100 students was surveyed using a structured questionnaire to identify the specific needs in these areas. The findings reveal that students struggle with time management, exam-related stress, public speaking anxiety, and academic workload. Furthermore, the lack of study techniques and addiction to mobile phones and social media were significant issues. The study recommends implementing workshops on time management, study skills, and public speaking, along with comprehensive career counseling to better prepare students for academic and personal success.

Keywords: Guidance and counseling, university students, needs assessment, time management, career counseling, academic support

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

University students face various academic, social, emotional, and personal challenges that require proper guidance and counseling services. These services help students navigate the complexities of university life, improve academic performance, and develop essential life skills. In developed countries, guidance and counseling are well-established parts of the educational system. However, in Pakistan, this area is underdeveloped, especially in regions like Balochistan.

Counseling in universities focuses on assisting students in managing anxiety, time management, exam stress, and academic workload, among other challenges. Effective guidance programs address not only academic needs but also personal and career-related issues. The present study aims to assess the specific guidance and counseling needs of university students, particularly at the University of Loralai.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of guidance and counseling services, universities in Pakistan, including the University of Loralai, lack comprehensive support systems for students. This study seeks to identify the most pressing counseling needs in personal, academic, and career development areas, providing a basis for improving student support services.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

To identify the specific needs of students' personal guidance and counseling at the university level.

To investigate the specific needs of students' educational guidance and counseling.

To assess the needs related to career placement and counseling for university students.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the specific guidance needs of university students. The results of this study will help universities develop targeted interventions to address these needs, thereby enhancing student well-being, academic success, and career readiness.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Role of Guidance and Counseling in Education

Guidance and counseling services play a crucial role in helping students develop academically, socially, and emotionally. According to Dash (2003), effective counseling addresses issues like academic stress, personal difficulties, and career uncertainties. Research by Kaila (2003) and Harper et al. (2003) highlights the need for guidance during adolescence, a critical period when students face heightened emotional and psychological challenges.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study draws upon two primary theoretical perspectives: Social Learning Theory and Personality Theory. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1986) emphasizes the interaction between individual behaviors and environmental factors, stressing the role of guidance in shaping student behavior. Personality theories, on the other hand, focus on individual traits and how counseling can help students understand themselves better and make informed decisions.

2.3 Challenges in Pakistani Universities

The availability of guidance and counseling services in Pakistani universities is limited. Ibrahim & Almas (1983) pointed out that while educational and vocational counseling services have been introduced in Pakistan, they are not widely implemented. Studies by Egbo (2015) and Parhar et al. (2013) emphasize the critical need for comprehensive guidance programs in universities, especially in regions like Balochistan, where students face unique cultural and economic challenges.

2.4 The Importance of Needs Assessment

Assessing needs in guidance and counseling is crucial for finding gaps in student support services. According to Bell (1974), needs assessment involves identifying and ranking student needs, which can help develop effective counseling programs. In this study, the university uses needs assessment to identify the specific areas where students need guidance the most.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study is of descriptive nature. The primary objective of the study is to examine the counseling needs of the students in the University of Loralai. The study employed a survey-based approach, using a structured questionnaire to gather data from students across various departments.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of the study included all students at the University of Loralai. A sample of 100 students was randomly selected from different departments, including Education, English, Computer Science, Business Administration, Commerce, and Zoology.

3.3 Research Instrument

A needs assessment questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and expert consultation. The questionnaire addressed three areas: personal guidance, educational guidance, and placement guidance. It consisted of 12 items, with responses measured on a Likert scale.

3.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire distributed to the selected students. The researcher faced challenges in explaining the purpose and relevance of the study to students unfamiliar with the concept of needs assessment.

4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. The results are presented in tables to highlight the response patterns for each question.

The following tables show statement wise response of male and female student with respect to their frequencies, percentage and mean score.

4.1 Personal guidance

Table 4.1 It is difficult for me to manage time and complete my tasks and assignments within time.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	24	43	12	11	10
Percentage	24%	43%	12%	11%	10%

Table 4.1 shows that 67 % students are in favor of the statement that “It is difficult for me to manage time and complete my tasks and assignments within time”.

Table 4.2 I feel stress and anxiety during exams.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	25	38	7	18	12
Percentage	25 %	38%	7 %	18 %	12 %

Table 4.2 shows that 63 % students are agree with statement that “I feel stress and anxiety during exams”.

Table 4.3 I feel afraid of giving presentation in front of my class.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	16	18	10	32	24
Percentage	16%	18 %	10 %	32 %	24 %

Table 4.3 shows that 56 % students are disagree with statement that “I feel afraid of giving presentation in front of my class”.

Table 4.4 I am able to use my leisure time and enjoy properly.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Frequency	9	41	22	19	9
Percentage	9 %	41 %	22 %	19 %	9 %

Table 4.4 shows that 50 % students are in favor of the statement that “I am able to use my leisure time and enjoy properly”.

Table 4.5 I feel difficulties in managing my academic workload and balancing it with other commitments.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	15	28	17	30	10
Percentage	15 %	28 %	17 %	30 %	10 %

Table 4.5 shows that 43% students are agree with statement that “I feel difficulties in managing my academic workload and balancing it with other commitments”.

Table 4.6 I am addicted to mobile, social media, and internet, and waste a lot of time on these things.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	19	36	17	15	13
Percentage	19 %	36 %	17 %	15 %	13 %

Table 4.6 shows that 55 % students are agree with statement that “I am addicted to mobile, social media, and internet, and waste a lot of time on these things.”.

4.2 Educational/Academic guidance

Table 4.7 I face difficulties in understanding the lecture properly.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	11	22	12	42	13

Percentage	11 %	22 %	12 %	42 %	13 %
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Table 4.7 shows that 55 % students are disagree with statement that “I face difficulties in understanding the lecture properly”

Table 4.8 I don’t know proper method of studies.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	13	19	12	40	16
Percentage	13%	19 %	12 %	40 %	16 %

Table 4.8 shows that 56 % students are disagree with statement that “I don’t know proper method of studies”.

Table 4.9 I know study techniques or strategies that can enhance my learning.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	26	48	17	9	0
Percentage	26 %	48 %	17 %	9 %	0 %

Table 4.9 shows that 74 % students are agree with statement that “I know study techniques or strategies that can enhance my learning”.

Table 4.10 There are some subjects where I need additional support or guidance.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	35	37	15	9	4
Percentage	35 %	37 %	15 %	9 %	4 %

Table 4.10 shows that 72% students are agree with statement that “There are some subjects where I need additional support or guidance”.

4.3 Placement guidance

Table 4.11 Before taking admission in the university, I was feeling difficulty in choosing appropriate course of study for my better future.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	33	35	10	10	12
Percentage	33 %	35 %	10 %	10 %	12 %

Table 4.11 shows that 68 % students are agree with statement that “Before taking admission in the university, I was feeling difficulty in choosing appropriate course of study for my better future”.

Table 4.12 I am satisfied with your current choice of my course of study in this university.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Frequency	29	45	10	6	10
Percentage	29 %	45 %	10 %	6 %	10 %

Table 4.12 shows that 74% students are agree with statement that “I am satisfied with your current choice of my course of study in this university”.

5. Discussion

5.1 Personal Guidance Needs

The data revealed that 67% of students struggle with time management and completing tasks on time (Table 4.1). Moreover, 63% of students experience stress and anxiety during exams (Table 4.2). Public speaking anxiety was another concern, with 56% of students reporting fear of giving presentations (Table 4.3).

These findings suggest a strong need for workshops on time management, stress reduction, and public speaking. Universities should consider implementing programs to address these challenges, helping students improve their personal effectiveness.

5.2 Educational Guidance Needs

In terms of educational guidance, 74% of students indicated that they are familiar with study techniques that enhance learning (Table 4.9). However, 72% of students reported needing additional support in certain subjects (Table 4.10), and 56% admitted to struggling with study methods (Table 4.8).

These results emphasize the importance of providing academic support, such as tutoring and study skills workshops, to help students overcome learning difficulties.

5.3 Placement Guidance Needs

The survey also highlighted significant placement guidance needs. Approximately 68% of students found it challenging to choose an appropriate course of study before university admission (Table 4.11). Additionally, 74% were satisfied with their current course of study but desired more career-related guidance (Table 4.12).

The results point to the need for a comprehensive career counseling program that helps students select suitable career paths based on their strengths and interests.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that students at the University of Loralai face a range of personal, educational, and placement-related challenges. Time management, exam stress, and the need for academic and career support are the primary areas where students seek guidance.

6.2 Recommendations

Personal Guidance: Implement time management workshops and offer stress-relief programs, particularly during exam periods. Introduce public speaking workshops to build student confidence.

Educational Guidance: Provide additional academic support through tutoring and study skills workshops. Improve teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles.

Placement Guidance: Establish a comprehensive career counseling program to guide students in choosing suitable courses and future career paths.

By addressing these needs, the University of Loralai can create a supportive environment that fosters academic success and personal development for its students.

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