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RESEARCH PAPER

Students' Perception about Academic Advising Satisfaction at Higher Education Level

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the students' perception about academic advising satisfaction at higher education level. All the students from two years master (M.A) degree programme and four years (BS) degree programme of eight departments from International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Faculty of Social Sciences were taken as a population of the study. 475 students were randomly selected as a sample of the study. The Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) was used to assess Academic Advising Style. For measuring level of the satisfaction, descriptive statistics was used. To compare the mean difference department-wise and gender-wise about academic advising satisfaction t. test was applied. It was concluded that from the major findings of the study those students who received departmental academic advising style are more satisfied as compared to those students who provided prescriptive academic advising style. Female students seemed more satisfied as compared to male students regarding the academic advising style provided to them. Students who satisfied from developmental academic advising style and they were also highly satisfied from the advising provided to them at Personalizing Education (PE) and this is the subscale of developmental academic advising whereas students who received prescriptive academic advising they were also satisfied from the advising provided to them regarding personalizing education and academic decision making but their percentage is less. It is recommended to Universities Administration to focus on Developmental Academic Advising Style and establish centers at universities/department level and nominate staff who may be responsible to provide developmental academic advising.

Introduction

The terms Advising and Academic Advising have very important role in students' lives. The Importance of academic advising could not be denied especially at higher educational level. Students' academic progress can be affected by the inadequate academic

advising which the major factor of academic advising is. Day by day students' enrollment is increasing and the quality of education is also decreasing day by day. The students' enrollment in different disciplines at University level is increasing day by day. Higher education is a platform where students work independently. They must know about the system and its demands from them to gone through this process and complete their degree during prescribed time. If they don't know the process and there is no body to advice and guide them they feel stressed and frustrated in the result dropout rate increases and university ranking is also affected. From the different factors which can affect the students' academic progress is no advising or guidance. Inadequate academic advising is a major factor that affects the students' academic progress. If enrollment is increased it will decrease the quality of education. Academic Advising is very important in students' lives, because they need proper advising during their studies at higher level. If the proper advising not provided to them, they will suffer a lot due to the lack of advising. If proper advising is provided to them, they could be able to continue their studies and they will be able to complete their studies without least hurdle.

Academic advising helps students to improve their skills in all aspects because; it is a method to improve someone's skills. The students' personal and interpersonal skills related to their success of academic field can be succeeding by the academic advisor. Academic advisor helps the students to command these skills. These are the academic advisors or the assigned faculty members help them to command these skills. Academic Advising means total development of the students. Academic Advising helps them and guides them in career planning, vocational education and university activities. It also helps them to achieve their goals or learning outcomes and the resources that are available in the campus and identification of those resources that are available in the campus. It also helps in decision making process and selection of the courses and building gaps. It will also help the students in developing relationship between the advisor and the advisee. There are two different advising styles for conducting academic advising.

One is related to Developmental Academic Advising Style (DAAS) and second is related to Prescriptive Academic Advising Style (PAAS) provided to students. Both are different in roles and responsibilities. The advisor and advisee relationship in developmental academic advising style is the purposive, friendly, and interesting. The formal and distant relationship of advisor and advisee exists in the Prescriptive Academic Advising Style (PAAS). It depends on the status and position of the advisor. Both styles are related to attitudes and behavioral styles of the advisor and advisee that are provided to students. Within developmental academic advising style and prescriptive advising style three components are discussed.

- Personalizing Education (PE)
- Academic Decision Making (ADM)
- Selecting Courses (SC)

Basically these three components are the subscales of Academic Advising. Personalizing Education (PE) is related to whole education of the students. In this style all

activities are related to students' affairs like career planning, vocational education, personal and social concern of the students. It also deals with the available resources in the campus and utilization of those resources in and out of the university. The activities that are arranged by the university and performed by the students are also the part of the personalizing education. The formal and distant relationship of advisor and advisee exists in Prescriptive Academic Advising Style (PAAS). The relationship of advisor and advisee depends on the position and status of the advisor in prescriptive advising style. In prescriptive advising style the role of the advisor is authoritative and advisor is all in all and the advisee totally depends on the advisor. Academic advising has the second component that is Academic Decision Making (ADM). This component is related to academic decision making and decision implementations. Students' information is also gained through this component. Students' abilities and interests are also assessed through this component. It will help the advisor to evaluate academic concentration of the students. Prescriptive Academic Advising Style shows the low level of satisfaction and developmental academic advising style show the high level of satisfaction perceived by the students. Students' academic progress is also evaluated by Developmental Academic Advising Style (DAAS). Developmental Academic Advising Style also provides the further solutions as an alternative steps. In prescriptive advising style students show low level of satisfaction because in Prescriptive Academic Advising Style (PAAS) the advisee is totally dependent on the advisor. He/she guides the advisee how to do it and what they need to do it. It means that which decision they need to take, all these decisions are related to academic decision making. The third component is the selecting courses that are related to course selection (Winston et al. 1984).

Literature Review

In higher education institutions the role of academic advising is very important, because the enrollment of the students increases every day and if they are not properly advised they can suffer a lot due to lack of proper Academic Advising. The advising process is not only helpful to reduce the dropout rate of the students but it also helps in retention rate of the students and it also promotes the academic success of the students. Developmental Academic Advising Style and Prescriptive Academic Advising Style are two approaches of academic advising.

There are two approaches, one is the developmental academic advising and the second is the prescriptive academic advising. According to these two approaches, the academic advisor and faculty members deal with students into two ways. The advisor is responsible for the whole education of the students in developmental academic advising style. It is the advisor who helps them not only in their academic matters but also in their other matters as well like planning their career, vocational education and their academic activities, their personal and social concerns. The advisor is also responsible for the whole education of students. While in Prescriptive Academic Advising Style the academic advisor only helps them in their academic matters like how to get registration of the courses and which subjects they need to take. The formal and distant relationship of advisor and advisee exists in prescriptive advising style. In Prescriptive Academic Advising Style the advisor is not responsible to discuss their personal and social concerns. For example, the

advisors in prescriptive advising style just guide them for the appropriate planning and procedure of those subjects that were taken by the students.

Greenwood (2006) describes the importance and impacts of academic advising at higher educational institutions, how advising bring together whole faculty, students and curriculum into truly meaningful educational whole. Austin (2008) further supports or explains the importance of advising in higher education, advising is not helpful in student retention, students involvement but also it is a major contributor of students' success at higher education level. Decision making process is the part of academic advising where the advisor exchanges information and communication with their students and students realize maximum educational potential through this process. Kuhn (2008) defines academic advising that it is similar but gives deep insight when explaining the role of the advising in different context. The advisor should play many roles like how he/she informs them, how he/she counsels them, how he/she suggests them. How he/she as a faculty member to teach them and mentors them as a whole. In this definition the other matters are also included like personal, social and academic matters, its means that academic or non-academic matters should be addressed by the advisor to support the whole personality of the child (Rohn, 2010).

Academic Advising at Higher Education

According to Niranjan et al., 2015 students' continuous performance tries to increase by the educational institutes that can lead to a successful avenue to graduation. According to Wray, Aspland, Barrette, (2014), for institutions regardless for their location students' retention is challenging for institutions. King, (1993) states that students' attrition as an area where the advisor needs to monitor them and the effects of monitoring can be judged through students' satisfaction, students' growth and persistence to graduation. Darling, (2015) discusses the attrition rate of the students he further said that unfortunately, all students will not graduate at the same time. As noted by Darling, 2015 universities were realize when a students is enrolled, it is the responsibility of the institution to help the students to complete their degree in time or remain the students until he or she did not get his/her degree. Anderson et al., (2014), there must be clear expectations of advising process between advisor and advisee in order to get high level of positive interactions between them. To make connections between students and institution, academic advising is the only service for them (King, 1993). Academic advisor should be aware about the requirement of the degree and the knowledge he or she has possessed for building the strong relationship between the advisor and students. The academic advisor should be aware about the knowledge he/she possessed for building the strong relationship between advisor and students and he/she also be aware about the degree requirement (Anderson et al., 2014).

Effective Advising Strategies

Universities offer academic advising to inform or familiarize the students with the university culture; it informs students about available resources and academic requirement

(Suvedi et al., 2015). According to Al-Asims, Thumi, 2014, Darling 2015, Vianden, Barlow, 2015), for guiding and monitoring of the students, the academic advisor must apply critical thinking skills and the advisor also defines plans that can lead students to successful completion of university degree. According to Himes, 2014, different advising approaches can be applied within higher education institutions. According to Alvarez and Town, 2016 to connect quickly to campus resources and the fast paced universities environment the higher education institutions should conduct mandatory orientation sessions that can promote the academic success of the students.

Prescriptive Academic Advising

The formal and distant relationship of advisor and advisee exists in prescriptive advising style. Only to guide them related to subjects and which subjects they need to take and how they can register those subjects is the purpose of advisor in prescriptive advising style. In this style the advisor did not like to discuss other matters like personal, social and academic matters (Crookston O Banion, (1972) and Sander, (1984). According to Donaldson et al., 2016, some institutions will promote prescriptive academic advising style where students' inquiries are discussed in an authoritative style or manner. It is a one way communication process, by this advising style the advisor assists the students through the logistical details of course selection and registration of these subjects (Anderson et al., 2014). According to Donaldson, Mckinney, Lee, and Pino, 2016, a Prescriptive Academic Advising Style might worse for some students because it addresses the students in an assertive way and other may be benefits from different approaches of advising. Students utilize their academic advisor as a resource person in prescriptive advising style. Because he/she helped them in scheduling their course planning and procedure of course registration and students feel satisfaction with their advisor, because it fulfills the expectations of the students (Donaldson et al., 2016).

Development Academic Advising

Developmental Academic Advising Style (DAAS) addresses all matters like their career planning, vocational education, their domestic problem or academic problem. It guides the students overall. The relationship between advisor and advisee in developmental academic advising is purposive, friendly, caring and trust worthy. In this style the advisor is responsible for the whole education of the child and it will also help them in the personality development of the child. In this style, the advisor is not only responsible in academic matters of the students but he or she responsible to guide them in their career selection and their other matters as well (Winston and Sander, 1984). In this advising style the shared responsibilities are discussed between students and academic advisor. They Work together toward students' academic achievement and the attainment of academic goals (Donaldson et al., 2016). According to Grites, (2013), in this advising style the advisor supports and stimulates students for their attainment of personal and educational goals, this can be possible by the utilization of the University resources. Strong academic advising style helps to promote students interaction with the faculty and staff that helps to integrate social and academic systems within the University (King 1993). Although students like Developmental Academic Advising Style (DAAS), some institutions

do not like to use this advising style because it's time is sensitive and have lack of academic advisor training (Anderson et al., 2014).

Material and Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine the students' perception about the academic advising satisfaction at higher education level. The nature of the study was quantitative. Students from eight departments, faculty of social sciences, international Islamic university Islamabad were taken as a population of the study. To select the sample stratified random sampling technique was used. 475 students were taken from eight departments, faculty of social sciences International Islamic university Islamabad as a sample of the study. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was consists of two parts. The first part is about academic advising style and second part is about academic advising satisfaction provided to the students. The first part has 26 statements. Personalizing Education ("PE), Academic Decision-Making (ADM) and selecting courses are the three subscales of Academic Advising Inventory (AAI). The statements were on continuum and were on 8 point rating scale. If student respond on statement and mark the tick from 8 to 5 numbers then it is developmental advising style if they mark from 4 to 1 it will go to prescriptive advising style. Total marks of the students were cumulated to make their score to decide either they think developmental academic advising style is used to provide them advising or prescriptive academic advising style. If the obtained score on personalizing education ranged between (16-20) it shows development academic advising is provided and if it is between (10-15) prescriptive advising is provided. Similarly if score on academic decision making aspect ranged from (15-18) developmental advising style was focused and if the score lies between (11-14) prescriptive style is used to provide advising on academic decision making. The last was selecting courses aspect if scores range between (9-16) developmental academic style is used and if it is (2-8) prescriptive style is used to provide advising to students. The second part of the questionnaire was about academic advising satisfaction comprised on 15 statements designed on 4 point scale. Scale range was from 1 to 4, 4 for strongly agree, agree, disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. No negative statement was used. The score on Academic Advising Satisfaction was divided into two categories satisfied and unsatisfied. It tooks 20-25 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Above stated questionnaire was used for data collection. Every care was taken to maintain official code of data collection and confidentiality.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Satisfaction level between Developmental Advising Style and Prescriptive Advising Style

Variables	N	Satisfied	%	Unsatisfied	%
Developmental Advising Style	259	226	87%	33	12%
Prescriptive Advising Style	216	100	46%	116	54%

The above table shows that students' level of satisfaction regarding the Developmental Academic Advising Style and Prescriptive Academic Advising Style. Total number of students who received developmental academic advising is 259 whereas 216 are those students who received prescriptive advising style. It means that 87% of the students are satisfied by the advising given to them whereas fewer are unsatisfied with this advising. In prescriptive advising style 46% of the students seemed satisfied whereas 54% of the students seemed unsatisfied. The comparison of the two styles show that more students are satisfied by the developmental advising style and fewer are satisfied by the prescriptive advising style.

Table 2
Satisfaction level according to subscales of Developmental Academic Advising Style

Variables	N	Satisfied	%	Unsatisfied	%
Developmental Advising Style	259	226	87%	33	13%
PE	259	196	76%	63	24%
ADM	259	145	56%	114	44%
SC	259	143	55%	116	45%

The above table shows that students level of satisfaction regarding the subscales of developmental advising style. Here three subscales are discussed under the developmental advising style. According to this table 259 students who received developmental advising style and their percentage is 87%. 76% of the students are satisfied by the advising given to them at personalizing education and only 24% seemed unsatisfied by this advising. 56% of the students are satisfied by the advising given to them at Academic Decision Making whereas 55% of the students seemed satisfied by this advising. The comparison shows that more students are satisfied at Personalizing Education as compared to two other subscales like Academic Decision Making and Selecting Courses. There is no difference exists in Academic Decision Making and Selecting Courses.

Table 3
Satisfaction level according to subscales of Prescriptive Academic Advising Style

Variables	N	Satisfied	%	Unsatisfied	%
Prescriptive Advising Style	216	100	46%	116	54%
PE	216	82	37%	134	63%
ADM	216	79	37%	137	63%
SC	216	29	14%	187	86%

The above table shows that students' level of satisfaction regarding the subscales of Prescriptive Academic Advising Style. Total number of students who received prescriptive advising style is 216 and their percentage is 46%. 37% of the students seemed satisfied by this advising style and 63% of the students seemed unsatisfied by this advising at personalizing education. 37% of the students seemed satisfied by the advising given to them at Academic Decision Making and 14% seemed satisfied by this advising at Selecting Courses. The comparison shows that 37% seemed satisfied at personalizing education and academic decision making and only 14% seemed satisfied by this advising at selecting courses. No difference exists between personalizing education and academic decision making. The percentage of both subscales is same. If comparison is given regarding developmental academic advising style and prescriptive advising style the more students are satisfied by the developmental advising style and fewer are satisfied by the prescriptive advising style given to them.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine the students' perception about academic advising satisfaction at higher education level. This section provides information related to academic advising style and academic advising satisfaction. To review all the findings of the study and compare with previous researches, whether the results of the study is similar or different. This section gives information related to the students' level of satisfaction perceived by the students. If students are satisfied then they will perform better as compared to those students who do not get proper advising. Highly satisfaction of the students supports the retention rate of the students. It will also increase the university ranking. The first objective is related to students' level of satisfaction regarding the Developmental Advising Academic Style. The results of the study show that Developmental Academic Advising Style is better than Prescriptive Academic Advising Style because more students are satisfied by the Developmental Advising Style and fewer are satisfied by the Prescriptive Advising Style. Because limited advising is provided in prescriptive advising style where the advisor helps the advisee only in academic matters. The status and position of the advisor has more importance in prescriptive advising style and their relationship depends on the status and position of the advisor that contained theory and practice. The relationship of advisor and advisee in developmental advising style friendly, caring, warm and trusting for various advising task. The difference lies in their philosophy and roles. It is an educational activity according to creamer (2000) that helps out university students to make decision related to personal and academic lives because this educational activity

further helps out university students in decision making process. The emerging needs and demand of the students have been changed, that's why the role of the advisor should be changed and advisor should address new situations and various settings. Developmental advising deals with the holistic approach that is equally supported for faculty and students. According to Upcraft et al., 2005 the friendly environment of the advisor in developmental advising style helps out in total education of the child and it also focuses on the course work of the students and their values. Based on the friendly and warm relationship of advisor and advisee, they can discuss their formal and informal matters with each-other. Informal interactions of advisor and advisee bring positive change in students' lives, in motivation of the students, academic achievement and personal developmental of the students. It will also facilitate in academic advising satisfaction, social integration, academic progress and retention of the students (Gorden, 2000). According to Grite and Gorden, (2000) inadequate service bears negative effects like negative feelings towards university and faculty as well and students show low academic achievement. Students develop negative feelings and attitudes towards their faculty members and advisors as well.

Conclusions

The results of the study shows that majority of the students are satisfied by the advising style given to them. Fewer seemed unsatisfied by the Developmental Academic Advising Style. Majority of the students seemed unsatisfied when they received Prescriptive Academic Advising Style. Fewer seemed satisfied by this style. The comparison of the subscales of developmental advising style shows that more students are satisfied at personalizing education as compared to two other subscales that are the subscales of developmental advising style. There is no major difference exists at Academic Decision Making and Selecting Courses that is the subscale of Developmental Academic Advising Style only at personalizing education students are more satisfied because it deals with the whole education of the students. Prescriptive Academic Advising Style was marginal because fewer students seemed satisfied with the subscales of Prescriptive Academic Advising Style. But students are not satisfied when advising provided to them at Personalizing Education, Academic Decision Making and Selecting Courses which is the subscales of Prescriptive Academic Advising Style. The recommendations from the findings and conclusions of the study suggested that advising is more useful when it is provided to them through Developmental Advising Style as compared to Prescriptive Advising Style. But its implementations demand strategic planning and students can get maximum benefits from it. Because Developmental Advising has multiple responsibilities and roles on the side of the advisor that is based on the assuring the quality of advising which is enhance the satisfaction level of the students and promote the academic progress of the students. The empirical evidence of the current study, together with global research, supports advocacy of Developmental Advising services to the tertiary students on the rationale of the total learning and socio-psychological development for building connections to the institutions and retention in the University leading to completion of their degree on time.

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