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ROLE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING AT B.Ed. LEVEL IN ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY

Abstract

This study was to identify the process of guidance and counselling at B.Ed. level in Allama Iqbal Open University. Allama Iqbal Open University is a university providing Distance and Non-Formal Education up to PhD level. The participants of the study were students, tutors and administrators of Allama Iqbal Open University. Students Advisory Cell provides guidance and counselling to his students. The university is a distance learning educational institution, thus there is no direct contact of students and teachers. It creates many problems to carry on study on regular basis. The guidance and counselling is necessary for the improvement of students' knowledge, belief, attitude and behaviour. The objectives of the study were, to find out the provision of services of guidance and counselling at Allama Iqbal Open University, to explain and explore the problems of distance learners and the use of internet for guidance and counselling at national was discussed. These include "Comprehensive Model for counselling, "ASCA National Model" and "Individual Counselling Model". After the study of related literature three questionnaires were drafted i.e. questionnaires for students tutors and administrators of Allama Iqbal Open University. Data collected was tabulated and analyzed by using percentage mean score and median. The conclusions of questionnaire were drawn accordingly.

Keyword: *Model, Guidance and counselling,
Allama Iqbal Open University.*

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Introduction

Distance education is being accepted in developing countries because it provides education to the masses. Now many institutions are providing distance education. Distance Education is complemented and supplemented through audio and video means while telephone tutorials are made available. The material of distance education is self-explanatory that includes self-assessment questions and exercises. This self-pacing requires guidance and counseling for distance learners.

According to Cohen, L (1995, p.21) guidance share “learning experiences to enable clients to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies related to making personal, educational and career decision.” While Chaudhry, M (2001, p.27) describes that guidance needs consistency. It is a continuous process as in other forms of educational development. Guidance and counselling both are the part of one’s social, intellectual, emotional and psychological needs.

Guidance is significant in every field of life. Due to vast areas of education and the subjects, guidance is a key to help students in solving the basic problems involved in the education. Guidance not only helps the students but analyzes their problems and solves them. In this regard Smith, M. (2011, p.329) states that professional guidance provided by organization is very little. It is the relationship between students and the teacher. Guidance is necessary for those who have emotional problems and face a lot of learning difficulties in solving their problems in getting education. Sometimes guidance is also acquired for talented students to utilize their energy in a positive way.

According to Kochhar, S.K. (2007, p 184) counselling is needed to students who have a consistent record of under achievement,

dropout, need financial aid to continue their education and may have behavioural problems such as drugs addiction, aggressiveness, bullying and shyness. In order to fulfill the needs of students and to solve their problems, provision of guidance and counselling is necessary. Thus the provision of guidance and counselling services at B.Ed level in Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad are taken into account.

Review of the Literature

Distance Education

Distance Education takes place when participants are a part with respect to time and space. In distance education tutor delivers instructions through technology from different location. In this regard Bakar, J.D. (1999, p.1) states that at the basic level of distance education where teachers and students are separated by physical means. The education takes place through audio, video and print media.

The B.Ed Programme of Allama Iqbal Open University

The B.Ed programme of Allama Iqbal Open University provides opportunity to the graduates to acquire training through Distance Education for teaching at secondary level. The B.Ed degree is awarded on earning of six credits (five credits of courses and one credit of compulsory workshop / teaching practice).

Role of Guidance and Counselling at Allama Iqbal Open University

Allama Iqbal Open University was established in 1974. It was established to provide education to masses at their door step. The Allama Iqbal Open University is providing guidance and

counselling to its learners. Students can get different information regarding admission date, tutor's name, schedule for workshops and results of different courses on the website i.e. www.aiou.edu.pk. Guidance and counselling is also provided through counsellor, Radio, T.V., prospectus and Students Advisory counselling Services.

General Problems in Guidance and Counselling for Distance Learners

Academic counselling and guidance is important for distance learners. In self learning so students face many difficulties in getting their education, thus guidance and counselling provides them the path to reach at their destination. Guidance is required in schedule of time for reading, to obtain comprehensive skills for reading and writing. Students face many problems; a few problems are discussed as:

Problems in Telephone Counselling

Telephone is one-to-one communication process. It also provides group counselling via teleconferencing. Thus teleconferencing involves the number of students at different locations to interact at the same telephone line. In this regard McLeod, J (2003, p.440) states that there may be interruption of line, may be busy for some time, an individual is waiting for question but the conference time is over. The use of telephone makes it difficult to evaluate benefits of distance students because telephone counselling differs from face to face counselling. No gestures are seen through telephone conferencing which create problems for individual.

Interaction Problems with Peer and Tutor.

In distance education learners are at par from their educational institution and there is no direct interaction with tutor/counsellor. Tutor and learners interaction is the base in distance learning. According to Simonson, M and Schlosser C (2008) students have multiple responsibilities beyond their study. There are unlimited course contents and access to all contents through counselling is impossible. Their needs cannot be fulfilled because an interactive and conduced environment is not created.

Social Conventions and Guidance

Macdonald (1975, p.283) describes that convention is an assembly or a representative delegate for some common objectives, while assembly refers for "to put together of parts". It includes social discussion and interactions. Thus it is stand for a number of people who have something in common, they get together and interact on the same topics and issues.

General Study Problems

There are many constrains in regular study of distance learners. In guidance and counselling students are motivated toward their study and for the content of their course of study. Peter, (2001) and Hussain (1999) stated that general study problems are analyzed, informal and group discussion are held, personal and social needs are considered including students achievement and family problems. Counselling is given and strategies are drawn to overcome these problems.

Models of Guidance and Counselling

A model is a graphical representation for the achievement of objectives. All the components or elements of model are interrelated to each other and these elements are placed according to categories. Model wraps the existing aspects and situation in a graphical form. Repa, V. (2012, p.59) describes that there are several approaches used in the model. These approaches are subject oriented are presented by the diagram, which shows the relationship between different attributes. Approaches in a sequential order provide a base for the construction of model. The approaches may contrast to each other but the basic principle is subject oriented. Model is not static but it is dynamic and changes can be sought out according to culture, situation and environment. The attributes include in the model are easily presented for the processing of data.

Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Model and the ASCA National Model

These models are comprehensive and need based according change in technology. These changes are brought through the education. Sink, C.A and Stroh, H.R (2003, pp.350-364) states that comprehensive model are linked to the happening of life. In these models career placement and problems are also discussed. School counsellors judge the needs and requirements of the students and provide them services to overcome these problems. School counsellor also provides counselling according to assessment of their needs. Counsellor may provide service of counselling to individual or in a group of students having the same problems or he may provide counselling services whenever a contact is made.

Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Model

Comprehensive Developmental Guidance Model was developed in 1970. Gysber, N.C. and Sun, Y. (1997) stated guidance is a core educational programme. It is not for the ancillary support services only. It is a comprehensive programme for guidance and counselling of students. This model promote students activities and help them in solving their problems and also create such a situation to prevent the existing problems and capable to increase the specific outcomes. This model provides guidance in an organized manner. This model was based on student achievements in the educational career.

ASCA National Model

ASCA (American School Counsellor Association) National Model is based on human development theory. This model is used for the counselling provision of all students as well as judges the students' achievement in the educational career. In this regard Baker S.B. and Gerler, E.R. (2008, p.34) states counselling programme of educational institution not only established the curriculum but increases that academic achievement is parallel to curriculum and helpful for their career. It open the new windows for personal and social setup. ASCA counselling model is connected with the national framework. It helps students in planning their study and shows the direction of their career. School counsellor also measures the change in academic achievement and behaviours of the individual.

According to Elisan, G and Patrick, J (2008) American School Counsellor Association has been contributing to educational reform since 1997. They also published a national standard for school counselling programme. The counselling programme provide a base for community development and educational

delivery system. This standard emphasizes three areas. (1) career (2) personal development (3) social development. The model tried to fill in the gap of educational improvement between the academically disadvantaged students as to compare with the advanced peers. On the line of ASCA Model, many schools in United States have adopted a Comprehensive School Counselling Programme to improve the educational standard and to help students in their career planning.

It was only about school counselling and it has limited value.

Individual counseling model

Individual Counselling model is consisted of a large number of theories of counselling, which are stated as under;

Individual Psychology

According to Carducci, B.I. (2009, p 152) it is a unique and well being for the promotion of humanity it focus on the individual thoughts, feeling, actions and the values that are used for the achievement of individual goals.

Person Centered theory

There are many areas of convergence and compatibilities between person centered theory and social work practice. In this regard turner, F. (2006, p.72) states that person centered theory supports to the students of social work in diminishing enthusiasm like poverty, child abuse as well as for the family violence. Person centered theory also control the university setting for unpredictable manners. This theory was developed for the person himself but covers the group, families, organization and community in a political way. This theory is presented in the basic

limitation of psychoanalysis, appropriate behaviour, emphasize on the controlling way of counselor and shows genuine way to individual.

Behavioural Theory

According to McLaord, J. (2007, pp. 124-125) a systematic multidimensional approach to counselling and psychotherapy based on behavioural theory is helpful in creating skills and self monitoring. It depends upon the characteristics of students and their study level.

Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature and survey method was applied. The study was concerned with role of guidance and counselling at B.Ed level in Allama Iqbal Open University. The study was carried out through questionnaire, thus their responses were statistically analysed to draw findings and conclusions.

Population

Since the study focuses upon the survey of the existing B.Ed programme at Islamabad and Rawalpindi Region and to evaluate the guidance and counselling provision by developing distance education guidance and counselling model. The population of both regions was taken. The population of the study was consisted of the following.

S. No	Population	Number
1	B. Ed Students of AIOU od Spring and Autumn Semester 2013.	14950
2	Tutors of AIOU, Spring and Autumn Semester 2013	1711
3	Administrators of Islamabad, Rawalpindi regions and Students Advisory Cell.	12

In order to select representative sample from the population, following sample were taken;

Students: 748, i.e. 5% of population,

Tutors: 171, i.e. 10% of population,

Administrators: 10, i.e. 83% of population

Instruments and Their Development

The research tool was questionnaire. Three questionnaires for students, tutors and administrators of AIOU were developed on the five point Likert scale. The questionnaires consisted of a number of statements for the measurement of the variable for guidance and counseling services.

Validation of the Questionnaires

In order to validate the questionnaire of the study experts opinion was taken into account. The questionnaires were developed as research tool. The questionnaires were reshaped by adding and correcting some statement in the light of experts' suggestions. The improved versions of the questionnaires were tried out on 10 students of B.Ed while on 5 tutors and 2 administrators. As a result of the feedback of pilot testing the questionnaires were further improved and thus the tools were finalized. The reliability was also checked by the opinion of different experts and found the high level of consistency.

Administration of Tools

Addresses and names of students, teachers/tutors and administrators were collected from Allama Iqbal Open University. The questionnaires were delivered personally and through pre-paid mail to the relevant respondents. Summary of responses is given as;

Number and percentage of responses of target population

S.No	Types of Population	Population	Sample	Responses	Percentage
1	Students	14950	748	730	97.89
2	Tutors	1711	171	165	96.48
3	Administrators	12	10	10	100

Statistical Analysis of Results

For the purpose of analyzing the collected data, the questionnaires were presented on 5 point Likert scale. The rating scale value was assigned to each response. According Noll, V.H. (1995, p.535) the responses are to be arranged in descending order i.e. strongly agreed, agreed, uncertain, disagreed and strongly disagreed while the weights are allotted as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The information collected through questionnaires was tabulated and analyzed, making use of descriptive statistics relating to mean, percentage and median. Findings, conclusions and recommendations were made on the basis of the analysis of data.

Findings and conclusions: for guidance and counselling mean and median were used the mean and median more than three is considered favourable and shows the positive direction while less than three is not considered unfavourable, but for more accuracy here the mean and median more than 3.5 and less than 2.5 were included in findings and conclusions. It is concluded that tutors states that counsellors need training on how to provide guidance and counselling, study material is written in a way which involves the students into studies. Tutors try to evaluate their teaching in terms of learning outcomes of the learners. Academicians provide guidance and counselling service to the needy students. Student Advisory Cell provides proper guidance in study programme. Proper guidance is provided to students on how to read and study better and for holding attention of

students' tutors raise questions. Guidance is provided on how to write good assignments through tutor's comments. Good working relations between teachers and students are promoted by the guidance and counselling service but provision of proper guidance by the university is not fulfilling for getting admission and tutorial meetings are not fruitful for guidance and counselling to students in their study difficulty. The academician of Allama Iqbal Open University states that tutors try to generate teaching, relating to the needs, abilities and capabilities of students. Proper feedback is provided to them. Tutors involve the students in discussion for holding their attention but teachers help is inappropriate in reducing tension among students and promote discipline and unsuitable in removing the poor concentration. Thus the provision of proper guidance by the university is not fulfilling for getting admission. In the Opinion of students of AIOU they get guidance for admission and study from the Students Advisory Cell at AIOU. Guidance and counselling service is also provided through regional offices to students. The Financial assistance is also provided to the needy students. Telephonic guidance and internet counselling is available in the university and special care is taken to resolve the students' problems by Student Advisory Cell. Tutors bring relief from stress to students from poor concentration. In the selection of courses, during depression and anxiety but pre and post admission guidance and counselling services are inappropriate and the ethical values are not maintained during guidance and counselling to students.

Recommendations

- Pre and post-admission guidance and counselling facility may be provided at AIOU.
- Effective tutorial meetings may be arranged for guidance and counselling to students in their study difficulty.

- Counsellors may be provided training in guidance and counselling.

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