

Exploring Effective Counseling Strategies to Address Challenges of College Students: A Review

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Abstract- College life is one of the most important stages in a person's life, happening between adolescence and adulthood. It is a memorable time filled with experiences and opportunities that help shape a student's future. This phase is crucial as students start focusing on their careers, following their passions, and building their dreams. College life is a mix of friendships, emotional growth, and learning, making it a special period for self-improvement.

In this study, a detailed search of the existing research was done, focusing on student behavior, attitudes, factors affecting academic performance, and the importance of counseling. The collected studies were carefully reviewed and analyzed, following clear guidelines to gather useful information and provide a thorough understanding of the topic.

Keywords- Counseling, Well-being, College student, Academic performance

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of the mental well-being of university students is increasingly recognized worldwide, as it plays a key role in keeping students enrolled. Counseling services are essential in helping people function better, improve their performance, and maintain their well-being throughout different stages of life. In universities, counseling is especially important in supporting students through the challenges they face both inside and outside the academic environment. These challenges can disrupt their learning and affect the number of students staying enrolled [1].

First-year students at technical colleges often face new methods of learning, teaching, and assessments. Many feel anxious about their coursework and might be disappointed with their early grades. The freedom they experience at university, where they have less supervision from

teachers, can also make managing time and planning difficult, which can harm their academic performance. The university environment presents a range of challenges, including adjusting to personal independence, social relationships, living with roommates, eating habits, and new academic programs [2]. These factors can impact student retention and well-being.

Some studies in different countries have shown that counseling can effectively help students with university-related challenges. In Brazil, counseling centers have helped students choose careers that match their skills and interests, rather than selecting them based on popularity or status [3]. In Nigerian universities, counseling services have significantly reduced dropout rates, giving the country the highest student retention rate in Africa [4].

Given the current rise in social and mental health issues among students in Indian engineering colleges and the importance of counseling to address these benefits (including: Emotional support, Improved academic performance, Career guidance, Better decision-making skills, Conflict resolution, Enhanced self-awareness, Stress management, Mental health support, Improved social skills, Support for personal development, Goal setting and achievement) as per the figure-1. The following objectives were outlined for this study:

- Identify students' specific counseling needs.
- Understand academic, career, and personal challenges.
- Recognize common issues like academic stress, time management, and mental health concerns.
- Explore factors contributing to stress, anxiety, and depression.

- Review the availability of academic support services.
- Determine areas where additional support is needed for students.

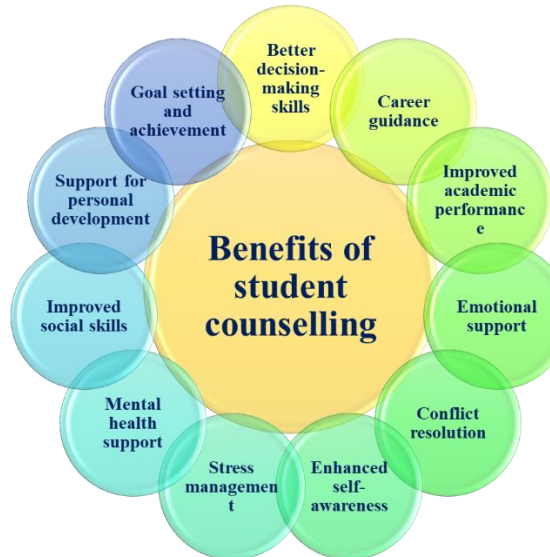


Figure 1: Benefits of student counselling

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is a review-based research, different from traditional methods as it does not involve collecting new data or conducting experiments. Instead, it focuses on analyzing existing studies to gather and organize information for investigation and future research. The review was conducted using sources like Google Scholar, Scopus, Mendeley, and Elsevier, allowing access to a wide range of studies. The study outlines research approaches, including tool development, structured teaching programs, and methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling in improving students' academic, career, and personal skills.

2.1 Classroom behavioral problems of students

The literature reviewed focuses on various aspects of student behavior, attitudes, issues affecting academic performance, and the role of counseling in addressing these challenges. Studies have consistently highlighted classroom misbehavior as a significant issue for educators, encompassing a wide range of actions from minor disruptions to severe misconduct. These misbehaviors, which can hinder the learning process, have been examined in diverse educational settings across different cultures.

Bray and Del Favero [5] discussed how classroom incivilities, such as tardiness, absenteeism, and academic dishonesty, create concerns for

teachers. However, the perception of such behaviors can vary, with some educators viewing certain actions as more disruptive than others. James [6], in a U.S. study, categorized student misbehavior based on its severity, ranging from mild actions like fooling around to more extreme cases such as fighting. Similarly, Ho [7] defined classroom misbehavior as actions that disrupt the teaching and learning process, noting that cultural differences influence how misbehavior is perceived and managed.

Little [8] expanded on this by describing specific types of classroom disruptions, including nonverbal actions, disobedience, tardiness, and physical aggression, all of which challenge teachers' ability to maintain a productive learning environment. Thompson [9] added to this by identifying additional disruptive behaviors such as defiance of authority, task avoidance, and misuse of school property, highlighting the negative impact of these actions on both teaching and learning. These behaviors can also include more subtle disruptions, such as overreactions to everyday situations and misuse of technology.

Pathak et al. [10] explored the emotional and behavioral problems faced by adolescents, linking these issues to family stressors like a lack of emotional closeness to parents, parental addiction, and marital discord. Their findings suggest that such stressors contribute to emotional and behavioral difficulties, which often manifest in the classroom. Similarly, Rachel and Daniel [11] examined how teachers perceive and handle student behaviors that disrupt the classroom environment, emphasizing the importance of teacher intervention in maintaining a conducive learning atmosphere.

Joshi et al. [12] investigated the underlying causes of behavioral problems in classrooms, identifying a need for strategies beyond academic interventions to address these issues. Their research called for a more holistic approach that includes emotional and behavioral support for students. Kulsoom et al. [13] looked at academic misconduct among medical students in Pakistan, finding that misbehavior varied based on gender, year of study, and the type of medical institution attended. This study provided insights into how different factors influence student behavior in higher education settings.

Qahtani [14] focused on the strategies used by faculty members at King Saud University to manage undesirable behaviors in academic classrooms. His research revealed the importance of disciplinary, preventive, and therapeutic measures in controlling classroom disruptions. Mohammad et al. [15] conducted a comparative

study on the perceptions of university teachers and students regarding disruptive behaviors, finding agreement on several key causes, including large class sizes, teacher injustice, and poor classroom management skills.

Lastly, Dorcas et al. [16] studied emotional and behavioral issues in Kenyan youths, noting that these problems were highly prevalent, particularly among younger students. Their findings showed that emotional and behavioral problems varied based on age, gender, and self-reported internalizing problems, emphasizing the importance of addressing these issues early on.

The literature highlights the need for comprehensive approaches to managing student behavior, both in terms of academic interventions and emotional support. Counseling plays a vital role in helping students navigate these challenges, improving their overall well-being and academic performance.

2.2 Student's attitude towards college and academics

Merilyn and Sandra [17] conducted a study to understand the relationship between students' attitudes towards consultation skills, their confidence in using these skills, and their academic performance. Surprisingly, they found no link between students' confidence in their skills and how well they performed academically. This finding suggested that students tend to perform well in skills they value, possibly due to their motivation to master those skills. However, confidence in these skills did not match their actual performance. This means that using confidence as a measure of performance may give a false sense of how well students are actually learning.

Chepcheng et al. [18] explored how campus environments affect students' attitudes. In Kenya, there had been ongoing issues with student disruptions in public universities. The study showed that social, academic, psychological, and physical aspects of the campus environment shaped student attitudes. Interestingly, there were notable differences between students in public and private universities regarding their views of the campus environment, though gender did not seem to have a big impact on their attitudes. The study recommended taking a closer look at how public university environments affect students negatively, suggesting that improving these areas could help improve student behavior.

Valerica [19] studied attitudes as part of an individual's personality, particularly how they influence behavior. Studies conducted with students from 'Dunarea de Jos' University in

Galați, Romania, the research found that some students believed active involvement was key to achieving success in education, while others thought they could succeed through other means. This study looked at how attitudes and mentality affect educational outcomes.

Dorothy et al. [20] sought to understand how practicing nurses viewed nursing students' attitudes toward clinical work. They surveyed 100 nurses at Agogo Presbyterian Hospital using structured and semi-structured questionnaires. The results showed that many nurses observed negative behaviors in students, such as arriving late to work, being absent without permission, and using mobile phones during clinical hours. Additionally, many nurses reported that students lacked commitment to their clinical duties. The study recommended that nursing schools should regularly assess students' behaviors and attitudes, working closely with practicing nurses to ensure students are meeting professional expectations.

Bandyopadhyay and Biswas [21] focused on first-year medical students' attitudes towards teaching methods in their Anatomy courses. Their study involved 114 students and used a questionnaire to assess their knowledge of different teaching approaches. Most students felt they had a good understanding of anatomy and expressed a preference for traditional chalk-and-board teaching methods, though some preferred the use of an LCD projector. This study provided insight into students' preferences for different teaching styles and their perceptions of how well they were learning.

Al-Sheeb et al. [22] examined the factors that influence first-year student satisfaction, such as academic, social, and environmental factors. Using a questionnaire and data analysis methods like correlation and regression, they identified three key factors that contributed to student satisfaction: with their courses, a sense of belonging, and knowledge of citizenship. The study showed that a mix of academic, social factors and sports plays an important role in shaping how satisfied students feel about their overall college experience.

These studies explore a range of factors that influence student attitudes, performance, and satisfaction in educational environments. From the importance of campus environments to the value of active involvement and professional expectations in clinical work, these findings provide important insights into how students view and approach their education. The role of counseling, teaching methods, and environmental factors are all shown to be critical in shaping students' behaviors, motivations, and satisfaction

with their academic experience.

2.3 Student oriented counselling

Jenna [23] conducted a study to examine how personal counseling affects stress, academic success, and student retention at a community college. The study found that students who attended six to eight counseling sessions experienced a significant reduction in their stress levels. This decrease in stress had a positive impact on their academic success, as stress was shown to negatively affect their performance. Students believed that counseling helped them manage stress, which in turn improved their academic results.

Education is crucial in developing students' skills and abilities, and success is often measured by academic achievements. However, the pressures of academic assignments, extracurricular activities, and other school responsibilities can be overwhelming. Shaterloo and Mohammadyari [24] emphasized the need for guidance and counseling services to help students improve their academic performance by managing these demands.

Natalia et al. [25] studied the opinions of faculty and students about academic counseling services at a health science center in the southeastern United States. They found that 59% of faculty believed academic counseling was important, but only 26% knew how to refer students for these services, and just 18% had actually done so. On the student side, 54% thought counseling was necessary, and 60% said they would seek help if needed, yet only 35% knew how to access these services. This highlights a gap in awareness and access to academic counseling, despite its perceived importance.

Renuka Devi et al. [26] looked at how counseling affects college students' academic performance. Their research showed that counseling services helped students overcome personal challenges, leading to better academic results. The study found that more counseling sessions were linked to greater improvements in academic performance.

Paul et al. [27] explored how students, head teachers, and teacher counselors viewed the effectiveness of guidance and counseling programs in secondary schools. All participants agreed that these programs were effective in improving students' academic, career, and personal skills. The study recommended that education stakeholders, including policymakers, school administrators, and organizations involved in education, should focus on supporting and expanding guidance and counseling services in

schools and college. This would help students develop the essential skills they need for academic and personal success.

The literature emphasize the importance of counseling services in education. Counseling helps students manage stress, improve academic performance, and develop key skills for their personal and professional lives. Ensuring that students and faculty are aware of and can access these services is crucial for maximizing their benefits.

3. CUMULATIVE REVIEW STUDY

The table 1 has been framed to focus on the important & common social aspects of college students, the target students and the findings of the literature study. This table will help to assess the main focus areas required for future studies.

4. ANALYSIS

The literature review identified an evaluative approach as a suitable method to assess the impact of counseling on students' behavior in the classroom, attitudes toward college, and academic performance. The research showed that counseling services in colleges effectively address students' personal challenges, providing individual support that can positively influence their academic performance. The number of counseling sessions was found to be closely related to improved academic outcomes. A questionnaire used to evaluate student behavior, attitudes towards college, and academic problems was considered an effective tool based on a review of books, journals, periodicals, and research studies. These reviews reinforced the idea that counseling is a structured dialogue between a counselor and a student. It is a cooperative process where the counselor helps students identify the sources of their difficulties.

The review highlighted various counseling methods used in colleges to help students overcome personal challenges. Individual counseling programs were shown to provide constructive support, which positively impacted academic performance. Additionally, the research emphasized that more counseling sessions were often linked to better academic results. The literature also examined classroom behavior issues, such as arriving late, absenteeism, sleeping in class, and academic dishonesty and explored the reasons behind these behaviors and outlined strategies that teacher can use to manage these problems, suggesting that these approaches often go beyond academic interventions alone.

The review also covered a descriptive, cross-sectional study that focused on first-year students

and used a pre-designed, tested questionnaire to measure students' knowledge of different teaching methods. Overall, the review emphasized the importance of counseling and targeted

interventions in improving both behavior and academic performance in a college setting.

Table 1: Cumulative research study about social aspects and findings of study

S. No.	Topic Studied	Target Students	Key Findings	Reference
1	Undesirable Classroom Behaviors	College of Education students	Faculty use strategies like discipline and preventive measures to manage disruptive behaviors	[14]
2	Attitudes Toward Campus Environment	Public and private university students	Students' attitudes are shaped by social, academic, psychological, and physical factors (sports and meditation) on campus	[18]
3	Counseling and Academic Success	College students	Counseling helps students improve their academic performance	[24]
4	Perceptions of Academic Counseling Services	Students and faculty at a health science center	Faculty and students support programs that help students succeed academically but more awareness of these services is needed	[25]
5	Adjustment Problems in Freshmen	College students	Freshmen often struggle with issues like loss of appetite, difficulty concentrating, and depression	[26]
6	Validity of College Adjustment Questionnaire	College freshmen	First study to check if the College Adjustment Questionnaire accurately measures how students adjust to college	[28]
7	Gender Differences in E-Learning	Students in an inter-university online project	Some differences were found between male and female students in how they use e-learning and their motivation	[29]
8	Predictors of College Adjustment	First-year education students	Colleges should add activities that help students adjust to college life as part of co-curricular programs	[30]
9	Homesickness and Adjustment	University students	For some students, severe homesickness makes adjusting to university life very difficult	[31]
10	Understanding Student Transition to University	Students in transition	Surveys and interviews show the challenges students face when transitioning to university	[32]
11	Mental Health Apps for Students	College students	Mobile apps can be a helpful tool for students dealing with mental health issues, along with counseling	[33]
12	Improving Student Mental Health and Well-Being	College and university students	Techniques like mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and technology-based interventions are effective for improving mental health	[34]

5. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE

Conclusions:

From the review study, following important conclusions have been drawn:

Need for Counseling Services: The review shows that students often face unexpected stress when transitioning from school to college, which can lead to feelings of sadness, loneliness, and anxiety. This highlights a strong need for academic and career counselors to support students during this critical period.

Importance of Workshops: The review underscores the benefits of workshops focused on time management, stress, and anxiety. These workshops can play a key role in the overall development of students, helping them handle the pressures of college life more effectively.

Addressing Coping Mechanisms: The study indicates that counseling is essential for students who might turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as smoking or drinking, to deal with academic stress and responsibilities. Effective counseling can help students find healthier ways

to manage their stress.

Counseling Programs: The review strongly suggests that all academic institutions should prioritize the implementation of comprehensive counseling programs. These programs should aim to equip students with the necessary academic, career, and personal skills to succeed.

Enhancing Academic Performance: Counseling services are shown to be crucial in improving students' academic performance due to the demanding nature of their assignments and tasks. Regular counseling can support students in managing their workload more effectively.

Influence of the Environment: The study found that students' attitudes are influenced by various factors including social, academic, psychological, and sports (physical) aspects of their environment. Understanding these factors can help tailor counseling services to better meet students' needs.

Behavioral Aspects: The review also assessed various behavioral issues that may require additional counseling support. Identifying these issues can help in designing targeted

interventions.

Role of Stakeholders: Education stakeholders such as teacher counselors, school and college administrators, Ministry of Education officials, and NGOs should use these findings to strengthen and sustain counseling services in educational institutions.

6. FUTURE SCOPE

This research serves as a preliminary review, providing a foundation for further investigation. Future studies should involve a larger group of students, along with faculty and professionals, to explore the full impact of counseling services. Expanding research to include diverse student populations and various educational contexts will provide a clearer picture of how counseling can effectively address students' needs. Additional research could focus on specific counseling techniques, the long-term benefits of different counseling approaches, and how environmental factors shape students' experiences. Such studies will help in refining counseling programs and achieving better outcomes for students in academic and personal development.

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