Academic Advising Satisfaction and Student Performance: A Correlational Study in Higher Education

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Academic advising is an essential element of an educational system that can help students solve their academic issues and concerns as well as help them to succeed in their educational path. The objectives of the study were to determine the level of academic advising satisfaction and perceptions of university students about their academic performance, and to measure the difference in academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of students on the basis of gender, university, subjects, semester and CGPA. This was a quantitative study. The population of the study was undergraduate students enrolled in the various undergraduate programs in all the public and private universities of the Lahore. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of 480 students. Data was collected using two questionnaires, Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) latest modification 2013, and Academic Performance Scale (APS) (2015) to measure academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance. The findings of the study revealed that there was moderate positive relationship between academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance at university level in district Lahore. It is suggested that institutions have to reorganize their academic advising programs and to educate students properly about the value and accessibility of academic advising services through awareness initiatives.

1. Introduction & Literature Review

Academic advising is a continuous educational process of guiding students about their academic issues and concerns. It plays a significant role in helping students in developing their academic paths and educational goals that are congruent with their personal interests and abilities. Academic advising is essential for students at each level of their studies. It becomes more important as they reach the terminal phases of their studies in universities. It also includes guiding and supporting students as they make decisions about their academic and career goals and assisting them in navigating the challenges of higher education (UGE Policy, 2020). The effective academic advising program improves students' overall academic performance in addition to guiding them through their educational choices. So, current study was designed to know the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance at university level.

Greenwood (2014) provided a definition of academic advising as it offers a more comprehensive account of the multiple purposes of advising. According to him, academic advising is an environment in which university advisors provide university students with guidance or insight on all of their academic, social, and personal matters. Therefore, an advisor should have to inform students, make suggestions about their problems, guide them when needed, disciplined them when required, mentor them when necessary, and even teach them as a faculty advisor. According to Tiroyabone and Strydom (2021), the quality of academic advising may significantly impact a student's decision to continue in university and the nature of student's educational experience.

Academic advising is a method for helping students acquire the abilities they need to succeed in their educational setup, whether it can be interpersonal or personal skills. It guides them as they pursue educational goals, professional growth, and vocational education. It can play integral part in assisting students in clarifying and understanding their academic and professional goals by giving information, guidance, and support. Students who have received academic advising are often more successful in their lives and careers because they are more focused on their objectives (UGE Policy, 2022). Students who receive quality academic advising report being much satisfied and optimistic to perform better academically than those who receive minimal academic advising. It implies that the effectiveness of academic advising on students' academic performance is significant. According to prior researches, the majority of higher education institutions do not emphasize the value of academic advising, and that might be detrimental to students' academic performance (Himes, 2014).

Student's grade point average (GPA), potential to complete a course, progression to the next semester, eligibility for probation and re-admission, as well as their study habits, cognitive outcomes, skills for self-improvement, all contribute to their academic performance. In Pakistan, the number of research studies in this area are very few. This gap was addressed by the current study on students' satisfaction with their academic advising and their academic performance.

Troxel et al., (2021) further added that academic advising directly effects the success of any institution and has a significant impact on how students perceive about their interactions with it. As a result, students who are satisfied with the advising they receive are more likely to

stay in university and outperform those who do not receive it. It assists in educating students about their duties and promotes and supports opportunities for successful engagement, academic performance, and retention (Chan et al., 2019). Academic advising is not only limited to university and course work only, but students can also take suggestions about career decisions regarding their interests (Zarges et al., 2018).

The principles of academic advising are based on educational developmental theories, and professionals of academic advising believed that a student-centered strategy is the best way to understand the cognitive processes that can be seen in the relationships that are formed between students and teachers (Crookston, 1994). Using a variety of theoretical frameworks, one can examine and characterize the educational action of advising. As a result, in order to have the necessary theoretical foundation and appropriately guide students, advisers need to understand as many theories as they can.

According to the analysis of practical opinions, students and teachers should be prepared to take different actions and make decisions. Researcher indicated some theoretical components that revealed the core of academic advising. According to Crookston (1994), student development theory provides an outline that can be used to design academic advising. In 2015, Crookston's student development theory was used by Strayhorn research work for "Changing the role of advisors to become cultural navigators can improve academic advising for students' success". The goal of student development theory is to explain how participation in a learning environment can help students progress academically and develop their abilities (Strayhorn, 2015). In accordance with the standards established by a specific institution, students can modify themselves, acquire new skills, and enhance previously acquired traits.

On the basis of the review of the related literature above this study was designed to explore academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of students and the relationship between both. Learning is one of the systematic phenomena in educational process in which advising plays a paramount role. Students always require professional academic advisors who can guide and advise them about their academic interests. Choosing academic careers according to one's personality, interests and aptitude is the key to success in life. Unfortunately, there is no proper mechanism in Pakistan for guiding university students. As a result, students choose subjects that are not according to their interest and mental abilities. Majority of the students become frustrated and feel squandered, which leads a bad impact on their academic performance. So, the study titled "Relationship between Academic Advising Satisfaction and Students' Academic Performance at University Level" was conducted to explore the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance at university level.

1.1 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the current study were:

1- To measure the level of academic advising satisfaction of university students.

2- To find out the level of perceptions of university students about their academic performance.

3- To identify the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of students at university level.

2. Research Methodology

The objective of the current study was to find out the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of the students at university level. This chapter covers research design, reason for the design, rationale of the study and methodologies. The population of the study and its sample group are also specified. The tool that was used to thoroughly study the research problem is described. Furthermore, pilot testing, reliability of the instrument, data collecting procedures and ethical considerations of the study is also discussed.

2.1 Research Design

A research design is a structured and logical plan developed to conduct a research study. Before choosing a research strategy for the study, the research design must be explained (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2009). It describes how the study will be accomplished and how all of the significant phases will be completed. It is an organized, purposeful and comprehensive process that aims to maximize the task's authenticity, effectiveness, and timeliness (Creswell, 1994). Researchers can design their studies using a number of different research designs. Depending on the type and setting of the study, a variety of different research methodologies can be used. The use of survey research design may be more successful and efficient for studying human qualities such as beliefs, abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral potentials (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2009).

The research questions of this study were descriptive in nature. So, quantitative survey research design was required. The method of quantitative analysis was used to analyze the collected data and appropriate generalizations were formed. The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between academic advising satisfaction of university students and their academic performance. As a quantitative research, it concentrated on numerical data for verifying the relationship and evaluating hypothesis. The quantitative approach allowed the researchers to collect data in a systematic manner while maintaining objectivity and generalizability (Gay et al., 2009).

Student's satisfaction with their academic advising and academic performance were both quantified. The findings of the study either responses to the academic advising inventory questionnaire or students' academic performance scale questionnaire, were all quantified. Therefore, the sampling procedures of the study was quantitative in nature. The research design was co-relational that was used to explore the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance at university level.

2.2 Population

Target Population of the Study: The target population of the study consisted of all undergraduate students enrolled in the various undergraduate programs offered by all the public and private universities of Lahore.

Accessible Population of the Study: For this study, the accessible population consisted of students enrolled in undergraduate programs offered by the faculties of pure sciences, social science, and business science in randomly selected public and private universities of the Lahore District.

2.3 Sample of the Study

In this study, the researcher used multi-stage sampling technique. At first stage, two strata were made of Public and Private Universities. At the second stage, two public and two private universities were selected randomly. At the third stage, 120 students of four-year program were selected by simple random sampling technique from each selected university. Students from different semesters were selected randomly from the programs running by each selected faculty. The total sample of the study was 480 students.

2.4 Instrumentation

The primary purpose of this research was to find out the relationship of students' satisfaction with their academic advising and how that relationship affected their academic performance at university level. There are two variables, academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance. Data was collected using two questionnaires, one for academic advising satisfaction and the other for academic performance of students. The instruments were reviewed by professionals who validated them, and improvements were made in response to their recommendations.

Table No 1: Reliability of Instruments

Sr.#	Instrument	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	Academic Advising Satisfaction	14	.857
2	Academic Performance Scale	17	.829

The table 1 shows that the reliability of academic advising satisfaction questionnaire was .857 and reliability of students' academic performance questionnaire was .829.

The factor-wise reliability of academic advising satisfaction questionnaire is given as under in the table 2

Table No 2: Reliability of Sub-Scales of Academic Advising Satisfaction Questionnaire

Sr.#	Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	Support	4	.840
2	Communication	7	.714
3	Encouragement	3	.751

The factor-wise reliability of students' academic performance questionnaire given as under in the table 2.

Table No 3: Reliability of Sub-Scales of Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire

Sr.#	Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
1	Cognitive Outcomes	4	.833
2	Life Skills	3	.821
3	Self-Growth	5	.765
4	Study Habits	5	.774

2.5 Pilot testing

The feasibility and acceptability of the suggested methodology and procedures must be evaluated in a pilot study, sometimes referred to as a test run, for any empirical research (Hazzi & Maldaon, 2015). The Cronbach's alpha value for academic advising satisfaction was 0.857 and for students' academic performance was 0.829.

2.6 Data Collection

The researcher personally visited each of the sample universities in order to collect data from the respondents using the questionnaire. Prior to collecting data from the undergraduate students, the researcher received written authorization letter from the chairman of DASE. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the sample. The process of filling out the questionnaire was properly explained to the respondents by the researcher. The questionnaire and a cover letter with an introduction were given. Permission was taken from the respondent before beginning the survey. Some of the professors also helped the researcher in approaching students and collecting data as well. The researcher approached 510 people, and 480 of them completed the questionnaires; the response rate was 94 percent. Missing data from any surveys was removed from the sample.

3. Data Analysis

IBM-SPSS 24 trial version was used to code and enter all completed surveys before data analysis. The results were derived using both descriptive and inferential statistics. IBM was used to calculate suitable statistical tools for descriptive statistics, such as Standard Deviation, Mean, Percentage, Frequencies, Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient and tools for inferential statistics such as t-test, ANOVA.

3.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The analysis and interpretation of data are covered in this chapter in order to address the research questions. IBM-SPSS 24 trial version was used for analyzing and coding the data. Mean and standard deviation have been obtained using descriptive statistical methods. The relationship between academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of the students at university level was investigated using inferential statistics and the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r). Mean difference in responses on the basis of demographic variables like gender was identified using independent sample t-test. And for demographic variables like semester, subject, CGPA, one-way ANOVA was used.

Table No 4: Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation between Academic Advising Satisfaction and Academic Performance of Students

	N	Student Academic Performance
Academic Advising Satisfaction	480	.507**
Sig.		.000

**0.001 level (2-tailed)

The table 4 shows the relationship between academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of university students that was investigated by Pearson product-moment

correlation coefficient. There was a moderate positive statistically significant relationship between academic advising satisfaction and students' academic performance ($r = .507$, $n = 480$, $p < .05$).

Table No 5: Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation between Sub-construct of Academic Advising Satisfaction and Academic Performance of Students

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Support	-						
Sig							
2. Communication	562**	-					
Sig.	.000						
3. Encouragement	.514**	.629**	-				
Sig.	.000	.000					
4. Cognitive Outcomes	.297**	.358**	.345**	-			
Sig.	.000	.000	.000				
5. Life Skills	.161**	178**	.163**	.211**	-		
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000			
6. Self-Growth	.112**	.292**	.270**	.232**	.248**	-	
Sig.	.014	.000	.000	.000	.000		
7. Study Habits	.235**	.413**	.411**	.243**	.048**	.260**	-
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.295	.000	

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed several significant positive relationships between academic advising satisfaction and student academic performance. Among advising sub-constructs, communication had a strong correlation with encouragement ($r = .629$) and moderate with support ($r = .562$), while encouragement also moderately correlated with support ($r = .514$).

In terms of academic performance, communication and encouragement showed moderate positive correlations with cognitive outcomes ($r = .358$ and $r = .345$, respectively) and study habits ($r = .413$ and $r = .411$). Support showed weaker yet significant correlations with cognitive outcomes ($r = .297$) and study habits ($r = .235$).

All three advising factors had weak positive correlations with life skills (ranging from $r = .161$ to $r = .178$) and self-growth (ranging from $r = .112$ to $r = .292$).

Among performance sub-constructs, cognitive outcomes correlated weakly with life skills ($r = .211$), self-growth ($r = .232$), and study habits ($r = .243$). Life skills and self-growth also had a weak relationship ($r = .248$), but life skills and study habits were not significantly related ($r = .048$, $p = .295$). Self-development, in turn, indicated a low level of correlation with studying habits ($r = .260$). In general, the findings indicate that effective academic advising, in

particular, communication and encouragement, is positively correlated with various dimension of student performance, albeit with weak to moderate correlation.

Table No 6: Levels of Academic Advising Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Academic Advising Satisfaction	480	1	5	3.67	1.152
Support	480	1	5	3.34	1.198
Communication	480	1	5	3.65	1.116
Encouragement	480	1	5	3.30	1.177

Table 6 presents the academic advising satisfaction levels of university students based on a 5-point Likert scale. Out of 480 respondents, the overall mean score was 3.67 (SD = 1.152), indicating a moderate level of satisfaction. Among the three advising factors, communication had the highest mean (M = 3.65, SD = 1.116), followed by support (M = 3.34, SD = 1.198), while encouragement scored the lowest (M = 3.30, SD = 1.177). This reflects that students at the university level in Lahore were moderately satisfied with academic advising, with communication being the strongest aspect.

Table No 7: Levels of Student Academic Performance

	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Student Academic Performance	480	1	5	3.72	1.025
Cognitive Outcomes	480	1	5	3.71	0.960
Life Skills	480	1	5	3.74	0.993
Self-growth	480	1	5	3.88	0.977
Study Habits	480	1	5	3.59	1.143

Table 7 also indicates the extent of student academic performance in terms of the answers to 480 university students on a Likert scale of 5 points. The mean was 3.72 (SD = 1.025), which showed that the level of performance was medium to high. Self-growth had the highest score (M = 3.88, SD = 0.977), life skills (M = 3.74, SD = 0.993) and cognitive outcomes (M = 3.71, SD = 0.960) and study habits had the lowest score (M = 3.59, SD = 1.143). These findings indicate that there is a general good performance among the students in Lahore.

Table No 8: Independent Sample t-test for Difference of Academic Advising Satisfaction on the Basis of University Type

Factors	Public Universities		Private Universities			
	M	SD	M	SD	t-value	P
Academic Advising Satisfaction	46.09	10.44	51.69	10.59	-5.83	.000
Support	12.45	4.01	14.30	3.59	-5.32	.000
Communication	24.22	5.09	26.99	6.13	-5.39	.000
Encouragement	9.42	3.30	11.40	2.69	-3.54	.000

Table 8 presents an independent sample t-test of the satisfaction with academic advising by university type. Findings showed that there was a big difference with the students of private universities to declare a higher level of satisfaction (M = 51.69) in comparison to those students of public universities (M = 46.09); t(479) = -5.82, p < .05. Private university students also scored significantly higher in support (t = -5.31, p < .05), communication (t = -5.39, p < .05), and encouragement (t = -3.54, p < .05). These findings suggest that academic advising is perceived more positively in private institutions.

Table No 9: Independent Sample t-test for Difference in Student Academic Performance on the basis of University Type

Factors	Public Universities		Private Universities			
	M	SD	M	SD	t-value	P
Student Academic Performance	61.72	8.59	65.14	7.61	-4.61	.000
Cognitive Outcomes	14.10	2.80	15.59	2.35	-6.32	.000
Life Skills	11.19	2.49	11.26	2.34	-0.30	.763
Self-Growth	18.85	3.29	20.01	4.37	-3.27	.001
Study Habits	17.56	4.02	18.27	3.53	-2.04	.042

Table 9 presents an independent sample t-test comparing student academic performance by university type. Results showed that students in private universities had significantly higher overall performance (M = 65.14) than those in public universities (M = 61.72); t(479) = -4.61, p < .05. Significant differences were also found in cognitive outcomes (t = -6.32, p < .05), self-growth (t = -3.27, p < .05), and study habits (t = -2.03, p < .05), with private university students outperforming in each. However, no significant difference was observed in life skills (p = .763). These results suggest stronger academic performance among students in private institutions.

There was a moderate positive significant relationship between academic advising satisfaction and student academic performance. Academic advising satisfaction was at a moderate level with communication rated highest among the factors. Students' academic performance was moderate to high with self-growth rated highest among all sub-factors. No significant gender-based difference was found in academic advising satisfaction, except females scored higher in communication. No significant gender-based difference in academic performance, though females had better study habits. Academic advising satisfaction varied significantly with age, with students above 23 reporting the highest satisfaction. No significant difference was found in students' academic performance across different age groups. Private university students reported significantly higher academic advising satisfaction across all sub-factors than public university students. The performance of the student in the private university was much higher and particularly the cognitive performance in the academic setting, as well as the self-growth and study habits. The level of academic advising satisfaction was also found to differ significantly between degree subjects, with the highest levels being the ICT students, particularly in support and communication. The academic performance of the subjects had no overarching difference, however, certain aspects such as cognitive outcomes and study habits differed. No present substantial difference between semester academic advising satisfaction with the exception that communication was higher during 3rd semester. There was a significant

difference in student performance in terms of academic achievement by semester, with the peak in 4th and good study habits in 3rd. There was no substantial difference between the overall academic advising satisfaction according to CGPA, though the scores in communication were higher in CGPA. The academic performance was significantly differentiated according to CGPA where the higher the CGPA, the better the cognitive performance and study habits.

4. Discussion

The results of this research indicated a positive moderate relationship between academic advising satisfaction and academic performance of students in the university at the university level, Lahore. This outcome aligns with previous researchers that focus on the benefits of academic advising to enhance student persistence, motivation, and success (Darling, 2015; Cuseo, 2010; Troxel et al., 2021). It also can be compared to the developmental model offered by Crookston (1994), according to which advising can be viewed as a teaching process that extends the administrative guidance further and incorporates the aspects of mentoring, encouragement, and personal development.

Among the most accurate findings was that students in the private university were found to have a higher level of satisfaction and best overall performance academics than students of public universities. Like the claim made by Greenwood (2014) that effectiveness as a recommendation is associated with institutional goals and priorities, this finding can be attributed to the increased resources, smaller classes, and more formalized advising mechanisms that is also characteristic of most private institutions. Conversely, the public university students have to struggle with high student to advisor ratios, insufficient time to have some individualized advising, and a shortage of professional advisor training. These structural limitations make academic advising to be less efficient and this is why advising satisfaction is still moderate among the students in Pakistani public sector.

It also became apparent in the analysis that the best dimension of advising satisfaction was communication between the advisors and the students, whereas the lowest score was given to encouragement. This conforms to what Himes (2014) emphasized that normative advising needs both factual information but also supportive and encouraging relationships. The poor scores on encouragement mean that most advisors in Pakistani universities might also be more interested in academic processes than encouraging or developmental dimension of advising.

The extensive influence of quality advising on the performance of students has been pointed out in international studies (Chan et al., 2019; Zarges et al., 2018). In the Pakistani context, however, advisory is an activity that is not emphasized and is frequently informal. As compared to the developed nations where there are structured advising models and specific advising centers, most universities in Pakistan leave this to the role of faculty members who might not necessarily have available specialized training and may not have adequate time with large teaching and administrative workloads. The identified difference highlights why a more formalized advising system would be necessary in Pakistan, which Troxel et al. (2021) also proposed as well, making the process of academic advising more professional on a global scale.

Moreover, the research affirms that academic advising is not just significant in academic performance, but also personal and professional growth of students, which are stated

by the developmental advising framework by Crookston (1994). Since most Pakistani students find themselves in university without prior career advising in their previous schooling, it makes academic advising on the university more important. Since the concern of the support provided to students is also emphasized in HEC Undergraduate Education Policy (UGE, 2020; 2022), the results of this study indicate a high demand to ensure Pakistan-based universities match the policy guidelines provided.

In brief, this research helps fill the research gap in the field of Pakistan where the academic advising knowledge is scanty. It proves that good advising can be effective, especially communication and motivational assistance can have a positive effect on students. Nevertheless, operations within a system in the academic community of the public universities, insufficient training of advisors as professionals, and poor knowledge by students on the purpose of the advisor is a monumental hurdle. Policy support, institutional commitment and advisor capacity building will thus be important in strengthening advising systems in Pakistan.

5. Conclusion

The study established that there was a moderate amount of academic advising satisfaction, and academic performance among the university students in Lahore. There is a positive relationship between the two variables at a substantial level. In terms of age, degree subject, and university type, academic advising satisfaction differed, and in terms of gender, semester, and CGPA, there was no difference. There were obvious variances of student performance by semester, CGPA as well as university type. These findings recommend that the improvement of the advising systems should be made to enable students have better advice and support towards their academic achievement.

5.1 Recommendations

- Universities ought to design official and systematic academic advising programs that have guidelines, roles and regular advising schedules so that all students can have a consistent academic advising.
- The academic advisors who are faculty members need to be professionally trained in methods of advice-giving, communication skills, and student counseling in order to positively influence the academic and personal development of the students.
- To ensure that the academic issues of students are resolved promptly, the universities should facilitate open communication between the advisor and the students via routine meetings, advising techniques and online to share their academic concerns.
- The institutions are supposed to have orientation, workshops and awareness programs that would create awareness to the students on the value, accessibility and usefulness of the academic advising services.
- To enhance the quality of advice that is given to students, public universities need to intensify their advising systems by reducing the ratio of students and advisors, allocating special advising times, and advising centers.
- Academic advising must extend beyond course choice and encompass academic and professional career planning and skill development and personal development guidance to enable students to make informed academic and professional choices.

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