

Academic Counselling as Student Support in Distance Education: An Evaluation Study

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Abstract

Academic counselling is perhaps the most important component of instructional process in traditional distance education setting. The face-to-face counselling reduces isolation of the learner and enhances dialogue with fellow learners and tutors. Effective organisation of counselling increases the level of learning, motivates the learners and contributes in reducing the dropout by the learners from the system. In the paper, an evaluation study of the organisation of academic counselling as a means of student support in distance education under a Regional Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was conducted. This study looks into the aspects of organisation of counselling for various academic programmes as on offer with IGNOU and provides some suggestions for further improving the sessions.

Abstrak

Kaunseling akademik merupakan satu komponen penting dalam proses pengajaran dalam persekitaran pendidikan jarak jauh. Kaunseling bersemuka mengurangkan perasaan terpencil pelajar dan mempertingkatkan dialog antara pelajar dengan tutor. Olahan kaunseling yang berkesan mempertingkatkan tahap pembelajaran, memotivasikan pelajar dan menyumbang kepada pengurangan keciciran pelajar. Dalam artikel ini, kajian penilaian organisasi kaunseling akademik sebagai satu bentuk sokongan pelajar dalam pendidikan jarak jauh di bawah Pusat Wilayah Indira National Open University (IGNOU) telah dilaksanakan. Kajian ini melihat beberapa aspek olahan kaunseling untuk beberapa program akademik yang ditawarkan oleh IGNOU dan memberi beberapa cadangan untuk memperbaiki sesi tersebut.

Introduction

The teaching process in distance education is aimed at imparting education from a distance and at reducing isolation and increasing dialogue. Various media like self-instructional print material, audio-video material, counselling sessions, practical for hands-on training, interactive radio sessions and interactive

television sessions are used as component of instruction process. The opportunity to learners for face-to-face (FTF) introduction with the teachers is provided at the Study Centre, which is the focal contact point for learners. At the study centre, process the Coordinator informs the counsellors as well as the students about counselling sessions well in advance. The number of counselling sessions varies from course to course based on the credit system. For example, in Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) for an 8-credit course there would be 10 counselling sessions. Counselling sessions are organised in accordance with local conditions.

There are different formats of counselling like through correspondence, teleconference or by radio instruction. Counselling by correspondence includes correspondence by letters, notes and tutor marked assignments. Teleconferencing sessions are aimed at supplementing the FTF counselling sessions held at the study centres. In this scheme, experts from the headquarters interact with the learners at the reception centres through one-way-video-two-way-audio. The students of various programmes are called to these reception centres to enjoy real-time interactivity with the learned experts. The teleconferencing sessions are carried out with the help of Gyan Darshan educational channel exclusively dedicated towards academic pursuits at IGNOU. Interactive Radio Counselling (IRC) is another important component of IGNOU's educational strategy. IRC is conducted in association with All India Radio on Sundays from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm dealing with programmes targeted for national or regional audience. The students put up their queries (not only academic, but also the administrative problems) over phone and they are immediately attended to by the academic counsellors present in the studios.

Organisation of Counselling Session

Under the IGNOU system the number of counselling sessions is based on the number of credits. One credit is equal to 30 study hours. A total of 10% of the total study hours are covered under counselling. One counselling session lasts for 2.5 hours. The dates, timing and blocks to be covered are intimated well in advance through the counselling schedule. The coordinator has the freedom to reorganise counselling schedule in terms of the time, day and date in accordance to local conditions. The coordinator is required to send the counselling schedule well in advance to the students as well as to the academic counsellor.

Intensive Counselling

As a matter of policy and practice, it is observed that for an 8-credit programme, 10 counselling sessions are scheduled. However, in certain circumstances it is

observed that either less than 10 students are registered for a particular course or that less than 10 students regularly turn up to counselling sessions. In such situations, the normal counselling schedule is terminated and intensive counselling is enforced. Under the scheme of intensive counselling 10–20% of the normal counselling sessions are undertaken. This is an administrative mechanism aimed at reducing costs and at improving efficiency.

Academic Counsellors Under Regional Centre, Karnal

The Regional Chapter of IGNOU was established at Karnal in the year 1991 having its purview over the States of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu, and Kashmir. At the time of its inception, it was regarded as a nodal centre for more than one State. The Regional Centre has a wide network of Study Centres as well as programme centres spread in almost every district of the State (except the areas of Gurgoan, Faridabad and Chandigarh) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

District	Study centre	Study centre code
Yamuna Nagar Sonapat	MLN College	1001
	Hindu College	1002
	Hindu College of Education Sonapat	1016
Panipat Bhiwani	Arya College	1003
	Vaish College	1004
Rohtak	Chhotu Ram College of Education	1005
	Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences	1026
	Gaur Brahman College	1027
Karnal	Govt. PG College	1008
Hisar	Govt. PG College	1009
	C. R. College of Education	1025P
	National Institute of Technology	1010
Kurukshetra	National Women's Education and Vocational Training Society	1028D
Sirsa	Guru Hari Singh College	1011
	Govt. PG National College	1014
Shahabad Markanda	Markanda National College	1012
Jind	Govt. PG College	1013
Ambala City	Sohanlal College of Education	1023

The maximum number of academic counsellors (143) for various programmes is with study centre 1005 that is in Chhotu Ram College of Education, Rohtak. It can also be noted that the maximum number of academic counsellors are the Bachelor's Degree Programme (BDP) (43%). Among the academic counsellors for the BDP programme, the maximum number is present in study centre 1004 (13% of the total BDP academic counsellors). The least number of

academic counsellors for BDP is in study centre 1026 (3.45%). The second highest number of academic counsellors operating in the region is in the field of Management Programme, which has 9% of the total number of academic counsellors. This is followed by Certificate in Computing (CIC). What can be observed in this case is that in the programmes that have the largest enrolment, the number of academic counsellors catering to their need is also the largest. Similarly, there is also a positive correlation between the student enrolment of a centre and the number of academic counsellors present at that centre.

Programme Study Centres (PSC) have been established for two programmes in the region – Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) and Post-Graduate Diploma in Maternal and Child Health (PGDMCH). For B.Ed the counsellor student ratio is the most favourable in PSC 1023, where it is to the tune of 1:5 and is worst in PSC 1027, where it is 1:10. PGDMCH programme has a very favourable student Counsellor ratio of 1:1.2.

Opinion on Counselling

Counselling session provide students a chance to meet fellow learners, making them more enthusiastic towards completion of course. The usefulness of counselling was found to be due to discussion on assignments, use of audio-visual aids, clarification of doubts and covering more content as that given in the lesson. To make counselling more interactive, training of counsellors in ‘group controlled learning, has been suggested.

Bansal and Chaudhary (1999) made an evaluation study of counselling through interactive radio. They found a higher percentage of participation of students in the interactive radio instruction than teleconference and FTF setting. This effectiveness of local radio instruction towards teaching-learning in terms of being low cost and improved delivery mechanism has also been supported by Tilson (1991), Cobbe (1995), Norman (1993), Olsson (1994), Corrales (1995), Leigh (1995), Bosch and Crespel (1995), Vargas (1995), and Sukumar (2001).

The success and effectiveness of counselling fully depend on various skills and competencies of counsellors. Sukumar (2000) conducted a study to assess the extent of awareness of counsellors about distance education instructional concepts; and what kind of instructional practice is adopted by them. A general fact of awareness about distance education instructional concepts and learning theories among the counsellors was reported. Even academic, personal or supplement communication was found to be low for motivating students, and thus the study recommended regular orientation programme for counsellors.

Objectives

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives in view:

- To compile the data related to counselling sessions scheduled and organised at each study centre under Karnal Region.
- To analyse the data to see at which study centre maximum and minimum counselling were organised.
- To find for which programme or course maximum and minimum counselling were organised.
- To establish the trend in terms of months when maximum and minimum counselling were organised.
- To suggest ways of further improvement in organisation of counselling sessions on the basis of above findings.

Methodology

As has been discussed above, all the study centres are required to prepare a schedule of counselling sessions to be organised for first or second semester or for full year in advance. For a course of 4 credits 5 counselling are scheduled and for a course of 8 credits 10 counselling are scheduled. If adequate students do not turn up in the counselling, then intensive counselling is organised. When the counselling starts, the study centres record the information and send this to the regional centre, where it is compiled and analysed for monitoring. The data pertaining to year 2003 was obtained from such records for the present study.

Results and Findings

The results and findings related to organisation of counselling sessions at various study centres for different academic programmes has been presented here under:

A. Counselling at Study Centre, Yamuna Nagar (1001)

Study Centre 1001 is perhaps the study centre with the most inclusive list of programmes. The counselling schedule for the study centre has been prepared in such a pattern that it not only covers all the programmes but also spans over the whole year. However, inter-programme as well as inter-temporal variations can be noticed with regard to the counselling pattern of the study centre.

Rural Development Programme

As far as the counselling sessions for Post-Graduate Diploma in Rural Development programme are concerned, counselling was spread over the months of March and April. The maximum number of sessions scheduled and

conducted was in the month of March. A total of 9 sessions was scheduled to be organised for the programme in the whole period of which 8 sessions were conducted.

Computer Programmes

The maximum number of sessions was organised in the month of October 2003 when all the 64 scheduled counselling sessions were organised. On the other hand, the least number of counselling sessions was in the month of February, when 15 sessions were organised. The maximum number of sessions was for the course CS-2 for which 15 counselling sessions were organised.

Bachelor Degree Programme

The maximum number of sessions was organised in the month of July when 52 sessions for BDP were scheduled as well as organised. On the other hand, FEG1 had the maximum number of sessions organised in the year (12 scheduled as well as organised), no session was held for MTE6 at any point of the year. Out of the 376 sessions that were scheduled, only 349 were held for BDP programmes in the year 2003.

Bachelor Preparatory Programme (BPP)

The BPP is a bridge programme for the BDP in Arts and Commerce. A fact that can be noticed is that the counselling for the same is well spread out through out the year. A maximum of 7 counselling sessions were scheduled in the month of November of which 6 were organised. On the contrary in the months of June, July and August, no counselling sessions were organised. Even among these the maximum number of sessions were organised for PSS.

Management Programme

In the case of management programmes, a total of 165 counselling sessions were scheduled as per the counselling schedule and 162 of them were organised. The maximum number of counselling sessions (37) were scheduled and organised in November. In the months of February, May, June and July no counselling sessions were organised. Further, for MS-21 and MS-22 the maximum number of 11 counselling sessions was organised.

Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE)

In the case of DNHE, the maximum number of sessions was for DNHE4 for which 3 counselling sessions were scheduled and organised. As for DNHE3 no session was either scheduled or organised. Totally 5 sessions were scheduled and organised for this programme in the year 2003.

Bachelor in Library Science

The maximum number of counselling sessions was organised in the month of April (7 scheduled and organised). However, in February, June, October, November and December no counselling session was conducted. The maximum number of counselling sessions was organised for BLS-3P, while the least number was for BLS-4P and BLS-6. Moreover, of the 27 sessions scheduled for BLS as a whole 26 were organised.

International Business Operations

In the case of counselling sessions in respect to Post-Graduate Diploma in International Business Operations (PGDIBO), as against 5 counselling sessions that were scheduled to be organised, only 2 sessions were organised.

Laboratory Techniques

As far as courses related Certificate Programme in Laboratory Techniques (CPLT) are concerned, the maximum number of sessions were organised in 2003 for LT-3 and LT-4 (16 scheduled and organised). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of May in which 36 sessions were scheduled and organised.

Certificate in Teaching of English (CTE)

The sessions for the CTE programme are evenly distributed in the months of March, April and October. Of the 14 sessions scheduled for the programme, 13 were organised. Most of the sessions were organised in the month of October (6 scheduled and organised). The most number of sessions was organised for CTE1 and CTE2 (4 scheduled and organised).

B. Counselling at Study Centre, Sonapat (1002)*Bachelor Degree Programme*

The most important programme activated at study centre 1002 is the BDP. For this programme, the highest number of counselling sessions were conducted for FHS (12 scheduled and 12 organised). On the other hand, for programmes such as EPS-3 and EPA-4, no counselling sessions were organised. The highest numbers of counselling sessions were organised in the month of August (56 scheduled and 54 organised). However, in months like December, no counselling sessions were organised.

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

As far as the courses for BPP are concerned, a total of 7 counselling sessions were conducted during the year. Most of the counselling sessions were in the month of November (3 scheduled and organised). The maximum number of sessions was organised for PMT and PSS.

Management Programme

The management programme had been allotted to the study centre, taking into consideration the fact that the area is of much industrial significance. The highest number of counselling sessions were scheduled and organised for MS1 and MS2 (10 scheduled and organised). In the month of September, maximum numbers of sessions were organised (20 scheduled and organised). However, there were months like February also when no sessions were organised for any of the Management courses.

C. *Counselling at Study Centre, Panipat (1003)*

M.A. in Hindi

As far as courses for MHD is concerned paper 1 and 2 have been given the same weightage that is 4 papers each. The sessions have been divided equally in March and April. A total of 8 counselling sessions were organised in the whole month.

M.A. in English

For the courses concerned with M.A. English, a total of 16 sessions were scheduled as well as organised. They were equally distributed in March and April and each paper had 4 sessions each.

Computer Courses

The counselling pattern for computer courses reveals a peculiar trend. The maximum number of counselling sessions has been conducted for CIC, with CIC-5 having the lion's share of 8 counselling sessions out of 9 sessions that were proposed. The least number of counselling sessions were conducted for CS-68 and CS-69 (3 each). The maximum number of counselling sessions were organised in the month of April, whereas in the months of June, July, August, September, October, November and December, no counselling sessions were organised.

D. *Counselling at Study Centre Vaish College, Bhiwani (1004)*

MHD Programme

As regards MHD, a total of 22 sessions were scheduled of which all 22 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for MHD1 and MHD2 (7 scheduled and 7 organised each). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of November (6 scheduled and 6 organised).

Rural Development Programme

A total of 10 sessions were scheduled of which all 10 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for RDD4 (4 scheduled and 4 organised each). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of November (8 scheduled and 7 organised).

Computer Programmes

A total of 346 sessions were scheduled of which all 346 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for CS-62P (21 scheduled and 21 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of October (70 scheduled and 68 organised).

Bachelors Degree Programme

A total of 147 sessions were scheduled of which all 147 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for FHS (10 scheduled and 10 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of October and November (37 scheduled and 18 organised, and 28 scheduled and 18 organised, respectively).

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

A total of 19 sessions were scheduled of which all 19 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for PMT (9 scheduled and 9 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of November (11 scheduled and 8 organised).

Tourism Studies

A total of 6 sessions were scheduled of which 4 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for TS1 (2 scheduled and 2 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of October (2 scheduled and 2 organised).

E. Counselling at Study Centre C.R. College of Education, Rohtak (1005)

Computer Science Programmes

Regarding the computer Science related programmes that are activated at study centre Rohtak, from a total of 218 sessions that were scheduled, only 216 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in August (58 scheduled and 57 organised). In the case of CS-62P 11 sessions were scheduled and all 11 were organised. The least numbers of sessions were organised for CS-68 and CS-5P for which the 1 scheduled session was organised.

Bachelor Degree Programme

As regards BDP, a total of 137 sessions were scheduled of which 136 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for FHS (23 scheduled and 23 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March (29 scheduled and 29 organised).

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

All the 6 counselling sessions scheduled for PMT were organised. Similarly, all the counselling sessions that were scheduled for PMT were also organised. Therefore all the 22 sessions that were totally scheduled were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in April.

Management Programme

A total of 77 sessions were scheduled of which all 77 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for MS (11 scheduled and 11 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March and September (19 scheduled and 19 organised).

Library and Information Sciences Programme

A total of 44 sessions were scheduled of which all 44 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for BLIS-7P (17 scheduled and 17 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of September (15 scheduled and 15 organised).

Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)

A total of 22 sessions were scheduled of which all 22 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for LSE9 (4 scheduled and 4 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (8 scheduled and 8 organised).

B.Ed.

A total of 24 sessions were scheduled of which all 24 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for ES331, 342 and 343 (4 scheduled and 4 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (22 scheduled and 22 organised).

Diploma in Creating Writing in Hindi (DCH)

A total of 11 sessions were scheduled of which all 11 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for DCH7 (3 scheduled and 3 organised). The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (7 scheduled and 7 organised).

F. Counselling at Study Centre, Karnal (1008)

Rural Development Programme

At study centre, Karnal, the PGDRD programme had been totally earmarked 16 counselling sessions and all of them were actually organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in October (6 scheduled and 6 organised). Among the courses, RDD4, RDD5 and RDD6 were allocated 4 counselling sessions each and all of them were organised.

Computer Programmes

For the computer programmes as a whole, 105 sessions were slated to be organised of which 95 were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for CS-65 (14 scheduled and 14 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for CS-75 (2 scheduled and 2 organised). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (36 scheduled and 27 organised).

Bachelor Degree Programme

The maximum number of sessions under the BDP programme was earmarked for EHI5 (8 scheduled and 6 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for MTE2 and 4 (4 scheduled and 2 organised each). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of September (112 scheduled and 99 organised). However, in the months of January, February, March, April, May, June and July, no counselling sessions were organised for BDP programme.

Library Science Programmes

Only the Bachelor Degree in Library Sciences is activated at study centre 1008. All the 102 sessions that were scheduled were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for BLIS-1 (21 scheduled and 21 organised). Similarly, the maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of October (43 scheduled and 43 organised). However, in the months from January to July, no counselling sessions were organised for BLIS programme. The least numbers of sessions were organised for BLIS7 (7 scheduled and 7 organised).

B.Sc. Programme

A total of 84 sessions out of the scheduled 90 sessions were organised for B.Sc. programme. The maximum number of 31 sessions out of 32 scheduled sessions were organised in the month of September. The maximum numbers of sessions in B.Sc. programme were organised for CHE-2 course (8 scheduled and 8 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for CHE-10.

Masters Programme in Hindi

The counselling sessions for the Masters programme in Hindi were concentrated in the month of November. Of the 8 counselling sessions that were scheduled, all the sessions were organised. All courses from MHD2 to MHD6 were allotted 2 sessions each.

Post-Graduate Diploma Programme in Translation

The postgraduate diploma programme in translation (PGDT) is of one-year and is a highly job-oriented one. Of a total of 16 sessions that were scheduled for the programme, 12 were organised. The highest numbers of sessions were organised for PGDT1 and 2 (4 scheduled and organised each). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of September (8 scheduled and 8 organised).

G. Counselling at Study Centre, Hisar (1009)

Rural Development Programme

As far as PGDRD programme is concerned, no counselling sessions were conducted in January, June and December 2003. The highest number of sessions was conducted in March and August (5 scheduled and 5 organised). The maximum number of sessions was organised for RDD1 (8 scheduled and 8 organised). Totally 32 sessions were scheduled for PGDRD of which 27 were organised.

Computer Courses

It can be seen that out of the 452 sessions that were proposed, 442 were organised. The most number of sessions were organised in the course, CS-4P (scheduled and organised). The same was the case with CS-62P. The least number of sessions were organised in CS-75 and CS-17 (2 scheduled and 2 organised). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March when 96 out of the 98 scheduled sessions were organised. However, there were months like June when counselling sessions were neither scheduled nor organised.

Bachelor Degree Programme and Masters Degree Programmes

The study Centre at Hisar runs both the BDP as well as the MEG Programmes too. The maximum number of sessions were organised for MEG programme (44 scheduled and 42 organised). The least number of counselling sessions were organised for EEG8 and EEG6 (1 scheduled and 1 organised). The maximum number of sessions was organised in the month of March in which 74 out of the 81 scheduled sessions were organised.

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

The BPP programme at study centre Hisar has its counselling sessions for PCO, PMT and PSS. The maximum numbers of sessions were conducted for PCO and PSS (14 scheduled and 13 organised). In total 37 out of the 40 scheduled counselling sessions were organised. Maximum number of sessions was organised in the month of February (8 scheduled and 8 organised). However, in January, June and July, no counselling sessions were organised.

Management Programme

The management programme at Study Centre 1009 has the peculiar feature that separate sessions are provided to clarify the queries related to Project work too. The maximum numbers of sessions were conducted for MS4 and 5 (12 scheduled and 9 organised). The least numbers of sessions were conducted for MS-41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46 and 47(2 each scheduled and organised). September was the month in which maximum number of sessions were organised (46 scheduled and 41 organised). However, in the months January, June, July and December no counselling sessions were organised.

B.Sc. Programme

The B.Sc. programme at study centre 1009 is an important component of the IGNOU module. The most number of sessions were conducted for CHE-11L, CHE-12L and CHE-4L (14 scheduled and 14 organised). The least number of sessions were organised for CHE10 (1 scheduled and 1 organised). April was the month in which maximum numbers of sessions were organised (37 scheduled and 37 organised).

Certificate in Teaching of English

For the courses related to the CTE programme, the maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (9 scheduled and 9 organised). CTE-4 had the maximum share of courses (6 scheduled and 6 organised). A total of 15 sessions were stipulated to be organised for the programme as a whole, of which 13 were organised.

International Business Operations

A total of 18 sessions were earmarked for PGDIBO and 16 sessions were organised too. Maximum numbers of sessions were organised in March and August (6 scheduled and 6 organised). The sessions for each of the course were almost equally distributed.

H. Counselling at Guru Hari Singh College, Jiwan Nagar (1011)

Bachelor Degree Programme

The most sessions for this programme were organised in the month of March (26 scheduled and 26 organised). The peculiar feature of this centre is that it has reported a large number of cases in which a big proportion of scheduled sessions were not organised. Topping the list is the month of October in which 52 sessions were scheduled and only 5 of them were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for FHS (19 scheduled and 19 organised). Among the courses, the least numbers of sessions were organised for EPA1, 4, ESO6 and EHI4 (10 scheduled and 0 organised).

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

Counselling sessions for both PSS and PMT were numbered at 9 each-scheduled as well as organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of November (4 scheduled and 4 organised).

Tourism Programmes

For BTS programme of the total 23 sessions that were proposed, only 12 were organised. The highest ratio between scheduled and organised ratios was in the month of November when all 4 sessions that were scheduled were organised. For both TS1 and TS2, 6 counselling sessions were organised.

I. Counselling at Study Centre Shahabad (1012)

Bachelor Degree Programme

The study centre at Shahabad conducted counselling sessions for the whole range of courses associated with BDP at various intervals through out the year. Out of a total number of 103 scheduled sessions, only 72 sessions were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for FHS9 (10 scheduled and organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for ACS (6 scheduled and 2 organised), ASP (5 scheduled and 2 organised) and ACC (6 scheduled and 2 organised).

BLS Programme

For the BLS programme as a whole, as against 25 counselling sessions that were scheduled in the month of October, only 16 were actually organised. This was the month in which maximum numbers of counselling sessions were organised. The maximum numbers of counselling sessions that were organised for a particular course was for BLS3P (14 scheduled and 13 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for BLS5 and BLS6 (6 scheduled and 3 organised).

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

A total of 33 sessions were scheduled and of them 24 were actually organised. Out of a total of 8 sessions that were scheduled in the month of November, all 8 were organised. However, no session was organised for PCO (7 scheduled and 0 organised). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for PSS (13 scheduled and 13 organised).

B.Sc. Programme

Out of a total of 50 sessions that were proposed, 26 were organised. The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of October (20 scheduled and 15 organised). For a single course, CHE2 had the maximum numbers of counselling sessions (5 scheduled and 5 organised). The least numbers of sessions were conducted in the courses LSE1, LSE6, LSE9 and LSE10 (1 organised in each case).

M.A. in Hindi (MHD)

A total of 71 sessions were scheduled of which 58 were organised. The most numbers of sessions were organised in the month of November when a total of 26 sessions were scheduled of which 17 were organised. Further, the maximum numbers of sessions for a single course was for MHD5 (11 scheduled and 11 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for MHD1 and MHD7 (5 scheduled and 3 organised each).

B.Sc. Practicals

The list that follows indicates that the study centre has been conducting sufficient numbers of practical sessions for courses related to the B.Sc. programme.

J. Counselling at Study Centre, Jind (1013)*Bachelor Degree Programme*

The study centre at Jind was established to cater to the needs of mid-section population of Haryana. The BDP caters to the aspirations of the post XII students of the region in a big way. The highest numbers of sessions were organised for ESO-2 (8 scheduled and 8 organised). On the other hand, the least number of sessions was organised for EEC-1 (1 scheduled and 1 organised). August witnessed an inter-month high in terms of the number of sessions organised (48 scheduled and 30 organised). On the other hand, in the months of June and December, no counselling sessions was organised. For the programme as a whole, 180 sessions was scheduled and 118 were organised.

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

The counselling sessions for PCO and PSS was distributed in the months of February, March and November. The maximum number of sessions was organised in November (8 scheduled and 5 organised). Overall there were 12 sessions that were scheduled and of them 9 were organised.

B.Sc. Programme

The maximum sessions in B.Sc. were organised for CHE-12 (28 scheduled and 28 organised). Most number of counselling sessions was organised in the month of October (38 scheduled and 38 organised). In the other months no counselling sessions for BSc programmes was conducted. In total 96 sessions were scheduled as well as organised.

K. *Counselling at Study Centre, Govt. PG National College, Sirsa (1014)*

As regards the courses stipulated for PGDRD, it can be stated that sessions were conducted only for 3 courses. A total of 18 sessions were scheduled and all 18 were organised. For all courses of RDD 6 sessions each were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March 2003.

Post-Graduate Diploma Programme in Translation

As in the case of PGDRD, for all courses 18 sessions were scheduled and organised in the case of PGDT. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March (5 scheduled and 5 organised). For PGDT1, 2 and 3, 6 sessions each were scheduled and organised.

Bachelors Degree Programme

In the case of BDP, all the scheduled 694 sessions were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of April (104 scheduled and 104 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised in ECO1 (4 scheduled and 4 organised), while the maximum numbers of sessions were organised in FHS (20 scheduled and 20 organised).

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

As regards the BPP programme, for PMT 16 sessions were scheduled and 15 of them were organised. In the case of PSS, it was 16 each. Totally, 32 sessions were scheduled and 31 of them were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of March (9 scheduled and 9 organised).

L. *Counselling at Hindu College of Education, Sonapat (1016)*

All the scheduled 90 sessions were organised. The maximum numbers of sessions were organised in the month of August (17 scheduled and 17 organised). For ES335, the maximum numbers of sessions were organised (12 scheduled and 12 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for ES341 and 343(1 scheduled and 1 organised).

M. *Counselling at Sohanlal DAV College of Education, Ambala (1023)*

It is noticed that 42 sessions were totally organised as against a scheduled number of 38 sessions. The maximum numbers of counselling sessions were organised in the months of November (12 scheduled and 12 organised). The maximum numbers of sessions were organised for ES-333 (4 scheduled and 8 organised). The least numbers of sessions were organised for ES335 (1 scheduled and 1 organised).

N. *Counselling at C.R. College of Education, Hisar (1025)*

The maximum numbers of sessions for B.Ed programme were scheduled and organised for ES-331, 332 and 333 (12 scheduled and 12 organised). Of the total 61 sessions that were organised, 16 sessions were scheduled and organised in the months of August and September. The least numbers of sessions were organised for ES-343 (3 scheduled and 3 organised).

O. *Counselling at Study Centre, PGIMS, Rohtak (1027P)*

In the case of PGIMS, Rohtak, 4 spells of 7 days duration each were conducted in June, August, September and October 2003.

Conclusions***Overall Counselling Related Academic Activities***

In all the study centres where BDP is activated, the maximum numbers of sessions were held for the same. Even with in BDP, FHS is the course in which maximum numbers of sessions were held in most of the study centres. The second largest numbers of proposed sessions were in study centre 1001 (1188) and of them 93% (1107) was held. The maximum numbers of sessions proposed and held was at study centre 1009 (1440 against 1227) though the conversion rate was a bit lower at 88.68% than study centre 1001.

Regarding the B.Ed. programme activated at 4 colleges of education in Haryana, the maximum numbers of sessions were proposed and held at Hindu College of Education, Sonapat (70 proposed and 70 held) with a conversion rate of 100%. C.R College of education Hisar also indicated a conversion rate of 100% (32 sessions proposed and held) as did CR college of Education, Rohtak (61 proposed and 61 held). The only college of education to have a conversion rate of more than 100% between proposed and held session was Sohanlal College of Education, Ambala with a conversion rate of 100 (38 proposed and 42 held).

However, it should be noted that not enough attention is paid in terms of counselling sessions for certificate programmes. Perhaps the feeling that shorter duration programmes are of minimal importance coupled with the fact that the attendance ratios for these programmes are the least. The withdrawal of the assignment component in certificate programmes may also have led to this trend.

One of the heartening areas is the trend shown by the sub-study centre at Guru Hari Singh College in terms of the counselling sessions held. The study centre conducted over 115 counselling sessions for the few programmes activated at the sub study centre. Further, the study centre also has more than 250 students on its rolls.

All the study centres where management programmes have been activated enough care has been taken to ensure that adequate attention is paid to all the Management Courses on offer in terms of counselling sessions. Very often the absence of experts in some of the areas related to management programme causes hurdles in the conduct of counselling sessions.

One of the aspects that need attention with regard to the utility of counselling to students is with regard to the optional nature of counselling sessions. The fact that in many of the counselling sessions students attendance is very low is due to the optionality clause. Unless it is made a rule that at least 75% of the counselling sessions should be compulsorily attended the targeting of counselling sessions will be very difficult. It may be worth suggesting that just as compulsory component exist in the counselling schedules of practical oriented programmes, similar components may be welcome in the case of non-technical courses also.

Cumulative Performance of the Study Centres

Management Programme

The pattern upon which Management programmes were held in the region indicates that there is great deal of diversity. There is great variation in the

numbers of sessions held for the programme itself. As against 162 sessions that were held in 1001, only 77 sessions were held in study centre 1005 – Rohtak. On the other hand the conversion ratio between proposed and held sessions was cent percent in Rohtak where as it was less than cent percent in Yamunanagar. Similarly, the courses for which maximum sessions were held varied from study centre to study centre. For example, in study centre 1001 MS-22 had the maximum numbers of sessions (11), whereas in 1009, the maximum numbers of sessions were held for MS4 and 5 (9). As far as the months of January, June and July are concerned, the least numbers of sessions for the programme were conducted throughout the state in these months.

Bachelor Preparatory Programme

As far as the BPP programme was concerned, out of a total of 202 proposed sessions, 184 were held in the region as a whole. At study centre 1001, a maximum of 7 counselling sessions were proposed in the month of November of which 6 were held. On the contrary in the months of June, July and August, no counselling sessions were held. Even among these the maximum number of sessions were held for PSS. As far as the courses for BPP are concerned at study centre 1002, a total of 7 counselling sessions were conducted during the year. Most of the counselling sessions were in the month of November (3 proposed and held). At study centre 1012 the counselling sessions for PCO and PSS was distributed in the months of February, March and November. The maximum number of sessions was held in November (8 proposed and 5 held). At study centre 1004, a total of 19 sessions were proposed of which 13 were held. Similarly, at almost all study centres counselling for BPP were conducted. But, it should be noted that the least numbers of sessions were conducted in the months of January, June and July at all the centres for this programme.

Bachelor Degree Programme

For the region as a whole 3128 sessions were proposed of which 2687 were held. At study centre 1001, as against 376 sessions that were proposed, only 349 were held for BDP programmes in the year 2003. At study centre 1002, the highest numbers of counselling sessions were held in the month of August (56 proposed and 54 held). In the case of study centre 1013, for the programme as a whole, 180 sessions was proposed and 118 were held. Out of a total number of 103 proposed sessions, only 72 sessions were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held for FHS (10 proposed and held). As regards study centre 1004, a total of 147 sessions were proposed of which 80 were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held for FHS (10 proposed and 10 held). At study centre 1005, the maximum number of sessions under the BDP programme was earmarked for EHI5 (8 proposed and 6 held). The least

numbers of sessions were held for MTE2&4 (4 proposed and 2 held each). The maximum numbers of sessions were held in the month of September (112 proposed and 99 held). Apart from the counselling trends at these major centres, what is noticeable is that in the months of January, February, June, July and December generally the least numbers of counselling sessions were conducted across the study centres.

MA in Hindi

For the region as a whole, 109 sessions were proposed and of them 96 were held. At study centre 1003, as far as courses for MHD is concerned MHD1 and 2 has been given the same weightage that is 4 papers each. The sessions have been divided equally in March and April. A total of 8 counselling sessions were held in the whole month. At study centre 1004, for MHD, a total of 22 sessions were proposed of which all 22 were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held for MHD1 and MHD2 (7 proposed and 7 held each). The most numbers of sessions were held in the month of November (6 proposed and 6 held). The counselling sessions for the Masters programme in Hindi were concentrated in the month of November. Of the 8 counselling sessions that were proposed, all the sessions were held. All courses from MHD2 to MHD6 were allotted 2 sessions each. For the MHD programme at study centre 1012, a total of 71 sessions were proposed of which 58 were held. The most numbers of sessions were held in the month of November when a total of 26 sessions were proposed of which 17 were held. Further, the maximum numbers of sessions for a single course was for MHD5 (11 proposed and 11 held). The least numbers of sessions were held for MHD1 and MHD7 (5 proposed and 3 held each).

Computer Related Programmes

In the region as a whole 1280 sessions were proposed to be held in the programme, 1222 sessions were held. At study centre 1001, the maximum number of sessions was held in the month of October 2003 when all the 64 proposed counselling sessions were held. On the other hand, the least number of counselling sessions was in the month of February, when 15 sessions were held. The maximum number of sessions was for the course CS-2 for which 15 counselling sessions were held. At study centre 1002, the counselling pattern for Computer courses reveals a peculiar trend. The maximum number of counselling sessions has been conducted for CIC, with CIC-5 having the lion's share of 8 counselling sessions out of 9 sessions that were proposed. The least number of counselling sessions were conducted for CS-68 and CS-69 (3 each). The maximum number of counselling sessions was held in the month of April, whereas in the months of June, July, August, September, October, November, and December, no counselling sessions were held. As far as computer

programmes are concerned with regard to Study Centre 1005, it can be stated that counselling sessions have been organised for the entire range of courses on offer. In this section, the highest numbers of sessions were held for CS-62P (11 proposed and held) CS-10 and CS-10P (10 proposed and 10 held). The maximum numbers of sessions were held in the month of August (59 proposed and 58 held). The least numbers of sessions were held for CS-68 (1 proposed and 1 held).

Rural Development Programme

As far as PGDRD is concerned, for the region as a whole, 85 sessions were proposed of which, 79 were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held in study centre 1009 (27 out of a proposed 32). As against this study centre 1001 held 8 sessions out of a proposed 9, study centre 1008 held all the 16 proposed sessions.

Post-Graduate Diploma Programme in Translation

Counselling for PGDT was conducted at 2 study centres in the region. Out of a total of 34 sessions that were proposed, only 30 were held. At study centre 1008, 16 sessions were proposed of which 12 were held. At study centre 1014, all 18 proposed counselling sessions were held.

Library Science Programmes

Counselling for BLIS was conducted at 4 study centres in the region. Of the 192 sessions that were proposed to be held only 177 were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held at study centre 1012 at which 77 were proposed and 63 were held.

MA in English (MEG)

In the case of MEG though only 58 sessions were proposed, 60 sessions were held. At study centre 1003, all 16 proposed sessions were held. However, at study centre 1009, though 42 sessions were proposed while 44 were held.

B.Ed. Programme

As regards B.Ed. programme it activated at 4 programme study centres of the region. As a whole, 123 sessions were proposed for the region as a whole, whereas 127 were held. The maximum numbers of sessions were held in study centre 1016 where all 90 proposed sessions were held. At study centre, 1023, though only 38 sessions were proposed, the faculty actually took 42 counselling sessions.

Recommendations

Some recommendations can be given to make counselling more effective are listed as follows:

- The duration of the counselling sessions, seem to be abnormally long. Therefore, it is important that they be broken into 2 sessions of one-hour duration each. This will enhance the span of attention of the students.
- In order that the counsellors perform their duties to their potential, they should be given effective FTF practical training.
- The counsellors should depart from the traditional lecture method and enhance the counselling component in the sessions
- Counselling sessions should be made more interesting by using audio-visual aids, so that more students turn up for counselling and the need for intensive counselling is minimised.
- In programmes with adverse Student-Counsellor ratio, new academic counsellors need to be identified and their services elicited for the benefit of the student community.
- At programme centres with adverse Student-Counsellor ratio, new academic counsellors need to be identified and their services elicited for the benefit of the student community.

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