

Role of Counseling on Academic Performance of Professional Undergraduate Students

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Abstract: Stress is interpreted as a more general term that describes the effects of psychosocial and environmental factors on physical or mental well-being. Mental stress in psychiatric disease and in daily life contributes to oxidative stress in the body. The adjustment difficulties of college students have been an emerging issue. Many studies have proved that the adjustment difficulties like appetite disturbance, concentration problems and depression are most evident in freshmen. The objectives of this study were to determine the relationship of counseling and academic performance among health science students. About 100 health science students of MBBS, B.Sc. (N) and Allied Health Science students were recruited for the study. They underwent face to face counseling with the college faculty members throughout the first year of their course. The pass percentage after counseling is increased as follows: among allied health science students, Anatomy from 82 to 91%, Physiology from 51 to 98 %, Computer science from 89 to 100 % and English from 96 to 100 %; among MBBS students, Anatomy from 60 to 87 %, Physiology from 80 to 93 %, biochemistry 73 to 90 %; among B.Sc. (N) students Anatomy & Physiology from 57 to 93 %, Biochemistry from 50 to 87 %, Fundamental of Nursing from 73 to 97 %, Psychology from 83 to 90 %, Microbiology from 80 to 90 %. The results of our study show that the counselling is a very important tool which increases the academic performances of undergraduate students.

Keywords: Student Counseling, Stress, Academics, Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is interpreted as a more general term that describes the effects of psychosocial and environmental factors on physical or mental well-being [1]. Mental stress in psychiatric disease and in daily life contributes to oxidative stress in the body [2]. The adjustment difficulties of college students have been an emerging issue. Many studies have proved that the adjustment difficulties like appetite disturbance, concentration problems and depression are most evident in freshmen [3]. Medical education is inherently stressful and demanding. Overwhelming burden of information leaves a minimal opportunity for the student to relax and recreate. Stress and depression have been consistently linked to mental and physical health effects [4]. An optimal level of stress enhances learning while excess of stress can cause health problems. This results in reduction of students' self-esteem and affects their academic achievement. A high

level of stress may have negative effect on cognitive functioning and learning of students in medical school [5]. The young student population is vulnerable to stress of higher professional education due to competitive environment. Comparing stress between medical and non-medical student, literature review shows that medical students perceive higher stress. If left unattended, any level of stress can lead to sleeping disorders, burnout, drop out etc [6,7]. The objectives of this study were to determine the relationship of counselling and academic performance among allied health science, B.Sc. (Nursing) and MBBS first year students.

MATERIALS & METHODS

About 100 health science students of MBBS, B.Sc. (N) and Allied Health Science students were recruited for the study. They underwent face to face counselling with the college faculty members

throughout the first year of their course. Individual counselling helps to have personal talks with the students that help them in understanding their problems and solving them effectively.

COUNSELING SESSION

The students are assessed at the beginning of the counseling. The assessment was done to clearly understand the problems of the students, so that their situations could be improved. The students were allowed to express his or her problem and full confidentiality was assured them. We offered encouragement and solutions to their problems and promised to support them whenever they wanted. Depending upon the problems, the students were continuously advised, trained for their academic success. They were given questionnaires about the sessions at the end of the first year and the analysis was based on their response to the questions and their

academic performances. The counselling included their personal problems and the academic difficulties in their studies. Finally, the analysis was done, depending on the questionnaire and the marks of the internal assessment throughout the year.

RESULTS

The pass percentage after counseling is increased as follows: among allied health science students, Anatomy from 82 to 91%, Physiology from 51 to 98 %, Computer science from 89 to 100 % and English from 96 to 100 %; among MBBS students, Anatomy from 60 to 87 %, Physiology from 80 to 93 %, biochemistry 73 to 90 %; among B.Sc. (N) students Anatomy & Physiology from 57 to 93 %, Biochemistry from 50 to 87 %, Fundamental of Nursing from 73 to 97 %, Psychology from 83 to 90 %, Microbiology from 80 to 90 %.

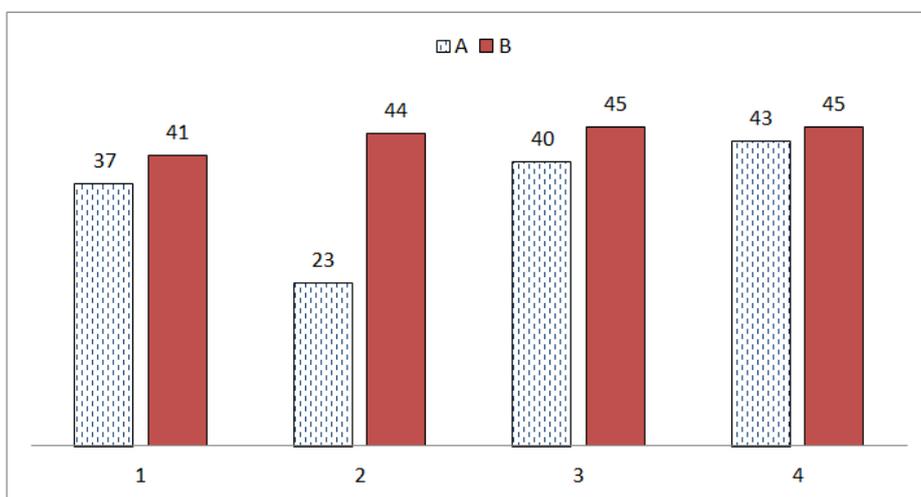


Fig-1: Academic Performance of Allied Health Science Students
 A: Before Counseling; B: After Counselling
 1. Anatomy, 2. Physiology, 3. Computer Science, 4. English

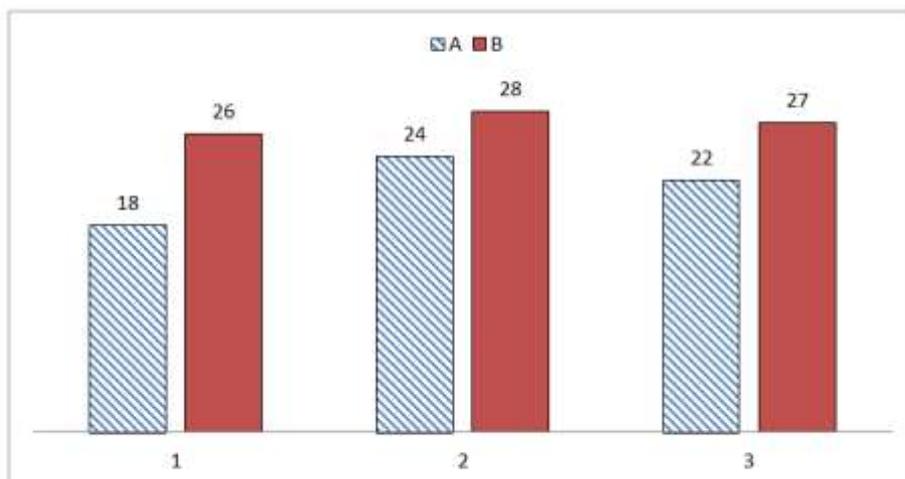


Fig-2: Academic Performance of MBBS Students
 A: Before Counselling; B: After Counseling
 1. Anatomy, 2. Physiology, 3. Biochemistry

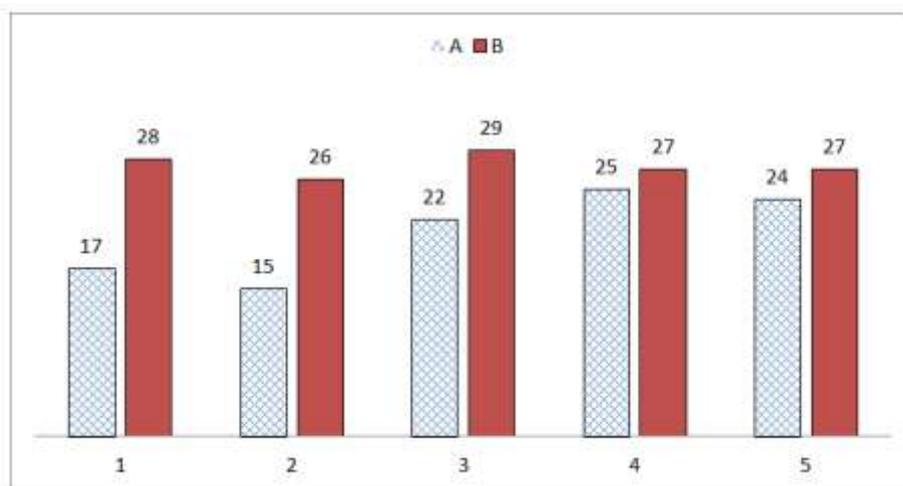


Fig-3: Academic Performance of B.Sc. (N) Students

A: Before Counseling; B: After Counseling

1Anatomy & Physiology, 2Biochemistry, 3Fundamentals of Nursing, 4Psychology, 5Microbiology

DISCUSSION

Counsellors support students directly in their academic life to foster, promote, and increase interpersonal competencies and academic achievement. The Counselling departments believe that sound education involves the development of the whole student. This includes the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of students' lives [8]. The findings of an earlier study state that there were improvements in the mean grades of special courses and also in both basic and special courses of male students in the experimental group, compared with those of male students in the control group. A supportive counselling programme can improve the academic performance of male nursing students [9]. Another study explored the impact of counselling on the academic progress and the retention by using both objective and self-reported measures. A comparison was made between the counselling of the clients and general student body, which indicated that the counselled students showed a superior retention as compared to their peers [10]. There are also studies which have proved that those who attended the counselling showed improvement in their grades as compared to those who did not [11]. Similar to other studies, our study also shows that the student counselling sessions are useful, which improves academic performance.

CONCLUSION

The individual counseling seemed to have a positive influence on the academic performances. The results of our study show that the counselling is a very important tool which increases the academic performances of undergraduate students.

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