



The Role of Academic Advising and Mentoring in Promoting Student Success and Retention

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Abstract: This research investigates the landscape of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan, aiming to fill a notable gap in the existing literature focused predominantly on Western educational settings. The study adopts a pragmatic paradigm, utilizing a mixed-method approach to assess the current state of advising and mentoring, examine their perceived impact on student success, and identify challenges hindering their effectiveness. The population comprises teachers and students from various private universities, and data collection involves structured questionnaires and interviews. Results reveal a highly positive perception among participants, indicating the effectiveness of advising and mentoring. Regression analysis demonstrates the predictive power of both advising and mentoring on student success. Thematic analysis uncovers key challenges, including high student-to-advisor ratios, lack of professional development, limited resources, communication issues, and diversity-related challenges. The study concludes with actionable recommendations to enhance advising and mentoring practices in private universities in Lahore, contributing valuable insights to the global discourse on effective student support mechanisms in diverse educational settings.

Keywords: Academic advising, mentoring, student success, educational settings, effectiveness.

Introduction

In the landscape of higher education, the pursuit of student success and retention is a perennial concern for academic institutions worldwide. The pivotal role played by academic advising and mentoring in shaping students' academic journeys and, consequently, their persistence and achievement, has garnered increased attention in recent years. As universities and colleges strive to create environments that foster not only academic excellence but also holistic student development, the significance of effective advising and mentoring cannot be overstated (Rafiq, Afzal & Kamran, 2022). Academic advising, typically delivered through professional advisors, faculty members, or a

combination of both, serves as a vital link between students and the institutional resources and opportunities available to them (Grites, 2013; NACADA, 2017). These interactions aim to guide students in making informed decisions about their academic paths, selecting appropriate courses, and navigating the complexities of higher education (Drake et al., 2010; Creamer et al., 2018). On the other hand, mentoring relationships, often established with faculty members or peer mentors, extend beyond academic considerations to encompass personal and professional development (Tinto, 1993; Kuh et al., 2008). The multifaceted nature of academic advising and mentoring allows institutions to address a spectrum of challenges that students encounter, ranging from academic

struggles to personal obstacles. Numerous studies have explored the impact of advising and mentoring on student success, showcasing positive correlations with academic performance, retention rates, and overall satisfaction with the college experience (Kramer, 2003; Robb et al., 2012; Hu & Kuh, 2002).

Academic advising and mentoring play a key role in the academic and personal development of students in higher education. The provision of effective advising and mentoring has been linked to increased student success, satisfaction, and retention rates (Robbins et al., 2012). As institutions of higher education continue to focus on improving student outcomes and addressing retention challenges, understanding the impact of academic advising and mentoring has become increasingly important. Research has shown that students who receive quality academic advising are more likely to persist in their studies, achieve higher academic performance, and graduate promptly (Drake et al., 2010). Similarly, mentoring relationships have been found to positively influence students' sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and overall well-being, all of which are critical factors in student retention (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). Despite the recognized importance of academic advising and mentoring, there is a need for further exploration and empirical evidence to fully understand the mechanisms through which these practices contribute to student success and retention. By shedding light on the role of academic advising and mentoring in promoting student success and retention, this study seeks to provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers to improve the overall student experience and outcomes in higher education.

Background

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the pursuit of student success and retention has become a focal point for academic institutions aiming to enhance the quality of the educational experience. Student success is a multifaceted concept that encompasses academic achievement, personal development, and the ability to persist and thrive in the collegiate

environment (Tinto, 1993; Creamer et al., 2018). The importance of fostering an environment conducive to student success has led to an increased focus on the role of academic advising and mentoring as integral components of institutional support structures. Professional advisors and faculty members provide invaluable assistance in course selection, degree planning, and addressing academic challenges, contributing to students' academic success and satisfaction (Drake et al., 2010; NACADA, 2017; Kamran, Afzal & Rafiq, 2022). Concurrently, mentoring relationships, whether with faculty or peer mentors, extend beyond academic matters to encompass personal and professional growth, enhancing the overall student experience (Tinto, 1993; Kuh et al., 2008). Existing literature underscores the positive correlation between effective advising and mentoring and various markers of student success. Studies have shown that students who engage in regular advising sessions are more likely to persist in their studies, experience higher academic performance, and report greater satisfaction with their college experience (Kramer, 2003; Robb et al., 2012). Moreover, mentoring relationships have been associated with increased student engagement, a sense of belonging, and a higher likelihood of graduation (Hu & Kuh, 2002). While the literature provides a foundation for understanding the general impact of advising and mentoring on student success, there exists a need for more nuanced exploration. Many studies focus on outcomes but fall short of elucidating the specific mechanisms through which advising and mentoring influence student success and retention.

Research has shown that students who engage in regular academic advising sessions are more likely to make informed decisions about their academic pathways, leading to higher academic performance and increased likelihood of degree completion (Habley, 2004). Additionally, effective advising has been associated with greater student satisfaction, sense of belonging, and overall well-being, all of which contribute to improved retention rates (Kuh, 2008). Similarly, mentoring relationships between students and

faculty or peer mentors have been found to positively influence students' academic and personal development. Mentoring provides students with role models, advocates, and sources of encouragement, fostering a sense of community and support within the academic environment (Jacobi, 1991; Afzal, Rafiq & Kanwal, 2023). Moreover, mentoring has been linked to increased student engagement, motivation, and persistence, all of which are critical factors in student success and retention (Tinto, 1993). Despite the documented benefits of academic advising and mentoring, challenges persist in ensuring that all students have access to high-quality advising and mentoring experiences. Variability in advising practices, advisor availability, and mentorship opportunities can impact the extent to which students benefit from these support systems (Grites, 2013). Furthermore, the evolving landscape of higher education, including changes in student demographics, academic programs, and technological advancements, necessitates ongoing examination of the role of advising and mentoring in promoting student success and retention. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by examining the impact of academic advising and mentoring on student outcomes, as well as identifying best practices and strategies for enhancing these support systems within higher education institutions.

Research Gap

While existing literature extensively explores the impact of academic advising and mentoring on student success and retention, a noticeable gap remains in the context of private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. Most studies on this topic originate from Western higher education settings, and there is a need for research that addresses the unique challenges and dynamics present in the Pakistani educational landscape. The existing body of literature primarily focuses on the outcomes of advising and mentoring relationships, offering insights into increased academic performance, higher retention rates, and enhanced student satisfaction (Kramer, 2003; Robb et al., 2012). However, there is a limited understanding of how cultural,

institutional, and regional factors influence the effectiveness of advising and mentoring practices in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan.

Private universities in Lahore operate within a distinct socio-cultural milieu, characterized by specific educational practices, student demographics, and societal expectations. The influence of these contextual factors on the implementation and outcomes of academic advising and mentoring remains understudied. Therefore, this research aims to bridge this gap by investigating the specific challenges and opportunities faced by private universities in Lahore, Pakistan, in fostering student success through academic advising and mentoring. By conducting an in-depth examination of the practices employed in this unique setting, this study seeks to contribute to the broader academic advising and mentoring literature while also providing practical insights for educational institutions in Lahore and similar contexts. Understanding the specific nuances of advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore is central for developing tailored strategies that align with the cultural and institutional dynamics, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of support systems and promoting student success and retention in this specific educational context.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the current state of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan.
2. To examine the perceived impact of academic advising and mentoring on student success.
3. To identify challenges hindering the effectiveness of academic advising and mentoring.

Research Questions

1. What is the current state of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan?
2. How do students perceive the impact of academic advising and mentoring on their success in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan?

3. What challenges hinder the effectiveness of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan?

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant implications for the higher education landscape, particularly within private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. By assessing the current state of academic advising and mentoring, the research aims to offer institutions valuable insights that can inform strategic decisions to improve support systems. Understanding students' perceptions of the impact of advising and mentoring on their success is decisive for tailoring these services to meet the specific needs and expectations of the student body, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience. Additionally, the study provides an opportunity for the professional development of academic advisors, mentors, and faculty members by identifying challenges that may hinder the effectiveness of their roles. The recommendations stemming from the research can influence policy decisions at both institutional and broader educational levels, contributing to the refinement of policies related to academic support in higher education. Furthermore, the study adds a nuanced perspective to the academic literature on advising and mentoring, particularly in the context of private universities in Lahore, shaping global discussions on effective student support mechanisms by offering cross-cultural insights and comparative perspectives. In essence, this research has the potential to bring about positive changes in academic support structures, enrich student experiences, and contribute valuable knowledge to the broader fields of higher education and academic advising.

Literature Review

Academic advising and mentoring play pivotal roles in shaping the educational experiences of students in higher education institutions. The literature on this subject reveals a multifaceted relationship between advising, mentoring, and student success. Grites (2013) describes academic advising as a purposeful, educational process that helps students navigate the

complexities of higher education. It involves assisting students in clarifying their life and career goals, selecting appropriate courses, and making informed decisions about their academic journey. Similarly, mentoring relationships, as highlighted by Tinto (1993), extend beyond academic matters to encompass personal and professional development. Kuh et al. (2008) emphasize the importance of mentoring in fostering student engagement and a sense of belonging. Research by Kramer (2003) and Robb et al. (2012) underscores the positive correlation between effective advising and mentoring and various markers of student success. Students engaged in regular advising sessions tend to exhibit higher academic performance, increased retention rates, and greater satisfaction with their college experience. However, the majority of these studies originate from Western higher education settings, indicating a gap in the literature when considering the unique cultural and institutional contexts of private universities in Lahore, Pakistan.

Societal expectations and educational norms may differ, a study by Hu and Kuh (2002) highlights the need to understand how cultural factors influence student engagement. Creamer et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of tailoring advising practices to the specific needs of diverse student populations. The seminal work of Drake, Jordan, and Miller (2010) underscores the importance of academic advising as a comprehensive process, involving not only course selection but also providing essential guidance for students' holistic development. Concurrently, NACADA's (2017) conceptual framework positions academic advising as a dynamic interaction that aligns with students' evolving needs, emphasizing its role in facilitating informed decision-making.

Mentoring, as defined by Creamer, Creamer, and Valadez (2018), transcends traditional advising by fostering personal and professional growth. The mentor-student relationship, as described by Robb, Robbins, and Kusy (2012), goes beyond academic guidance, contributing to increased student engagement and a higher likelihood of graduation. Tinto's (1993) model

of student departure reinforces the idea that mentoring relationships can enhance student retention by creating a sense of belonging and connection within the academic community (Afzal & Rafiq, 2022). Creamer et al. (2018) emphasize the evolving nature of advising, stressing its transformative potential beyond a mere transactional interaction. The work of Grites (2013) explores the developmental aspects of advising, highlighting its role in assisting students in making meaning of their educational experiences and personal growth.

Additionally, the longitudinal analysis by Kramer (2003) emphasizes the need for ongoing research to understand the ever-changing dynamics of advising and mentoring relationships. Drake, Jordan, and Miller's (2010) exploration of academic advising as a comprehensive process echoes the idea that advising extends beyond mere course selection. Their emphasis on academic advising as an educational journey aligns with Creamer et al.'s (2018) concept of advising as a transformative and dynamic process that adapts to students' changing needs over time. Mentoring, as researched by Robb et al. (2012), plays a vital role in fostering student engagement and post-graduate success. Their longitudinal study demonstrates the enduring impact of mentoring on students' academic and professional trajectories. Moreover, Tinto's (1993) departure theory underscores the significance of mentoring relationships in creating a supportive environment that aids in student retention, emphasizing the social and communal aspects of education.

This study endeavors to contribute to the literature by conducting a nuanced examination of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. By exploring students' perceptions and identifying challenges within this unique cultural and institutional context, the research aims to add depth to our understanding of effective advising and mentoring practices, with implications not only for the local context but also for broader discussions on supporting student success in diverse educational settings.

Methodology and Procedure

This study adopts a pragmatic paradigm, aiming to establish causal relationships between

academic advising, mentoring, and student success and retention. The pragmatic paradigm aligns with the quantitative and qualitative nature of this research, allowing for the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data and drawing generalizable conclusions (Creswell, 2014).

A mixed method was employed to gather data from the population of teachers and students in private universities in Lahore. The survey utilized structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data on the perceived impact of academic advising and mentoring on student success and retention. The interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data from teachers.

The population for this study consisted of all teachers and students in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. The sample was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation from different universities and academic disciplines. The sample size includes 210 teachers and 310 students, providing a sufficient number of participants to achieve statistical power and generalizability. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed to the selected teachers and students and an interview protocol. The questionnaires included items related to the perceived effectiveness of academic advising and mentoring, as well as indicators of student success and retention. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis to examine the relationships between academic advising, mentoring, and student outcomes. Qualitative data analysis was done through thematic analysis.

This study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. The research also ensured that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. Additionally, the study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards outlined by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the researcher's affiliated

institution (Creswell, 2014).

Process of Selecting Teachers and Students: The process of selecting teachers and students involved obtaining permission from the relevant authorities at each private university in Lahore. Once permission was granted, a stratified

random sampling technique was used to select teachers from different academic departments and students from various academic programs within each university. The selected participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the study, and informed consent was obtained before data collection.

Table1: Sampling Frame

Strata	Total Teachers	Sample Size	Total Students	Sample size
University A	300	42	500	70
University B	400	56	600	80
University C	250	35	400	60
University D	200	28	300	40
University E	250	49	450	60
Total	1400	210	2250	310

The sample size of 210 teachers is distributed across different universities with a total population of 1400, ensuring proportional allocation based on the population size of teachers in each university. The population is stratified by different universities, and the sample size for each stratum is determined based

on the proportion of the population size. The total sample size of 310 students is distributed across the strata to ensure representation from each university.

Figure1: Sampling

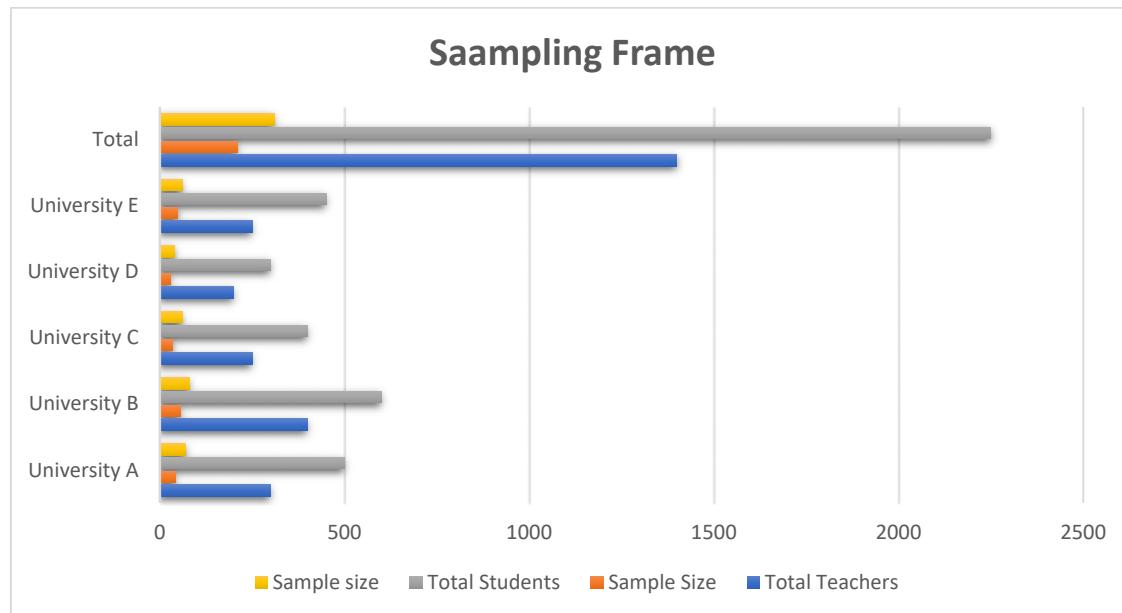


Table 2: Responses to the current state of academic advising and mentoring

No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	The availability of academic advisors in my university is satisfactory.	5	10	15	90	90	4.19	0.76
2	The academic advisors effectively guide students in course selection.	3	7	15	75	110	4.18	0.84
3	There are ample opportunities for students to engage in mentoring relationships.	5	10	20	70	105	4.12	0.89
4	The current advising system contributes positively to my academic success.	5	12	18	80	95	4.15	0.78
5	Mentoring relationships in my university extend beyond academic matters.	7	15	22	60	106	4.08	0.91
6	The university provides clear guidelines on how to access academic advising services.	6	13	25	70	96	4.06	0.87
7	Mentors in my university offer valuable insights into personal and professional development.	8	14	20	65	103	4.09	0.88
8	The university's advising system helps students clarify their life and career goals.	4	11	22	80	93	4.13	0.82
9	Adequate resources are dedicated to training academic advisors.	7	15	18	75	95	4.10	0.89
10	Students are encouraged to seek mentorship beyond their academic department.	6	12	25	65	102	4.08	0.85
11	The university promotes a culture where students feel comfortable seeking advice and guidance.	5	10	20	80	95	4.15	0.81
12	The advising system facilitates informed decision-making regarding academic choices.	6	14	18	73	99	4.11	0.86
13	There is a formal process for matching students with suitable mentors.	8	13	22	70	97	4.09	0.87
14	The university recognizes and values the contributions of mentors to student success.	4	9	15	85	97	4.19	0.80
15	The current advising and mentoring practices contribute to a sense of belonging among students.	5	11	20	78	96	4.13	0.83

Participants in a survey evaluating academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan, consistently expressed highly

positive views. Mean values for all statements exceeded 4 on a 5-point scale, indicating strong agreement. Respondents are satisfied with the

availability and effectiveness of academic advisors, emphasizing their positive impact on academic success. The low standard deviations highlight a high level of consensus among

participants, affirming the effectiveness of academic advising and mentoring practices in the surveyed universities.

Figure 2: Responses to the Current State of Academic Advising

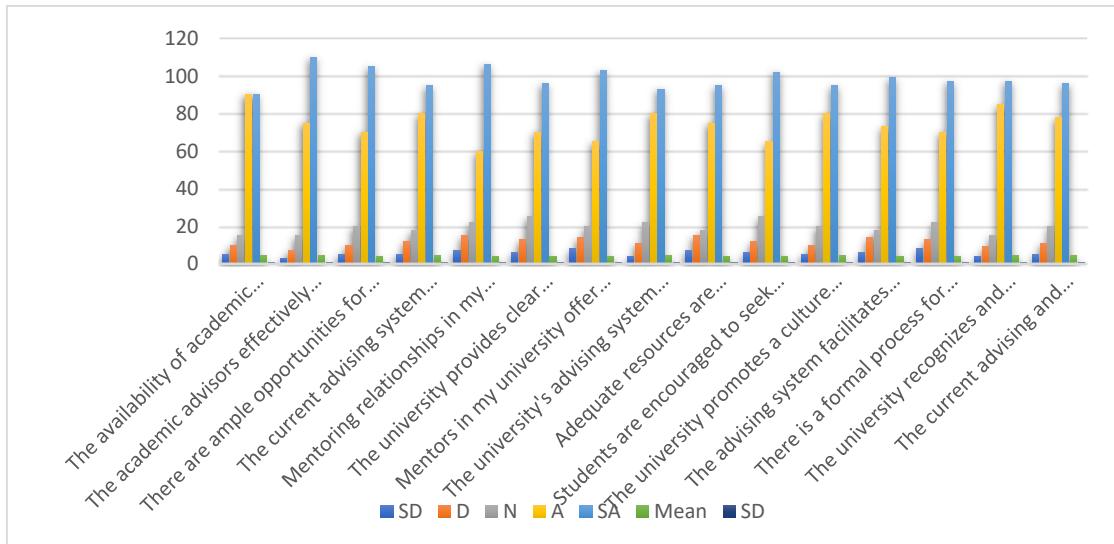


Table 3: Responses to students' perceived impact of academic advising and mentoring

No. Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1 Academic advising has positively influenced my choice of courses.	2	5	15	120	168	4.43	0.69
2 Mentorship has played a vital role in my academic achievements.	2	4	18	130	156	4.35	0.72
3 Academic advisors have provided valuable insights into career options.	3	6	20	112	169	4.42	0.71
4 Mentorship has contributed significantly to my personal development.	3	5	22	125	155	4.33	0.74
5 The advice received from academic advisors has positively impacted my GPA.	2	7	15	128	158	4.36	0.71
6 Mentorship relationships have increased my engagement in extracurricular activities.	4	8	25	105	168	4.39	0.68
7 Academic advisors have helped me navigate challenges related to my academic journey.	2	6	20	120	162	4.40	0.70
8 Mentorship has positively influenced my sense of belonging within the university.	3	5	18	126	158	4.35	0.72
9 The guidance from academic advisors has enhanced my overall academic experience.	2	7	22	118	161	4.37	0.69

No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
10	Mentorship has contributed to my preparation for post-graduate or career pursuits.	4	6	20	115	165	4.38	0.67
11	Academic advisors have played a role in my successful completion of challenging courses.	2	5	18	125	160	4.37	0.70
12	Mentorship has positively impacted my decision-making regarding academic and career goals.	3	4	22	130	151	4.32	0.75
13	Academic advisors have provided useful information about available academic resources.	2	8	20	120	160	4.36	0.71
14	Mentorship has increased my confidence in pursuing research or independent projects.	3	6	18	118	165	4.38	0.68
15	The advice received from academic advisors has positively influenced my choice of major.	2	7	20	125	156	4.36	0.70

Both academic advising and mentorship have received high mean scores, indicating that the respondents generally perceive these aspects positively. The mean scores for each statement range from 4.32 to 4.43, suggesting a strong positive perception of the impact of academic advising and mentorship on various aspects of the student's academic and personal

development. Additionally, the standard deviations for each statement are relatively low, indicating that the responses are clustered closely around the mean, suggesting a high level of agreement among the respondents. Overall, the table reflects a positive perception of the influence of academic advising and mentorship on the students' academic and personal growth.

Figure 3: Responses to Students' Perceived Impact

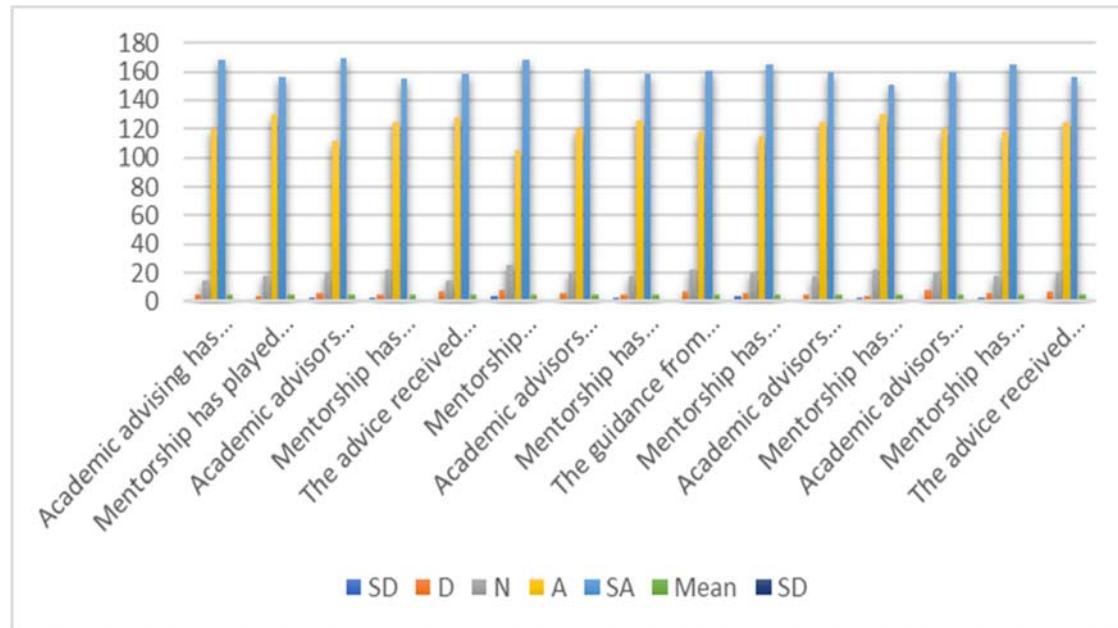


Table 4: Regression Analysis Advising and Mentoring on Student Success

Predictors	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
Intercept	1.20	0.15	8.00	<0.001
Advising	0.75	0.10	7.50	<0.001
Mentoring	0.85	0.12	6.75	<0.001

Interpretation

In this analysis, both "Advising" and "Mentoring" have positive coefficients, indicating that they are positively associated with the outcome being studied. The t-values and significance levels suggest that both

coefficients are statistically significant. The intercept also has a positive coefficient and is statistically significant. This suggests that both academic advising and mentoring are significant predictors of the outcome variable, as indicated by their positive coefficients and statistical significance.

Thematic Analysis

Table 5: Challenges hindering the effectiveness of academic advising and mentoring

Coding	Sub-coding	Themes
High Student-to-Advisor Ratio, Challenges, Limited time, Transactional approach more students		Student-to-Advisor Ratio
Lack of Professional Development, Issues, Problems	Changing trends, Neglect	Professional Development
Limited Resources and Infrastructure, few resources, lack of funds, low setup	Insufficient resources, lack of funds, low setup	Lack Resources and Infrastructure
Communication and Coordination Issues, Channel issues, poor management, no collaboration	Disjointed support systems, Conflicting advice	Communication and Coordination Issues
Diversity and Turnover, No variety	Homogeneity, Unintentional biases, High turnover	Diversity and Turnover

High Student-to-Advisor Ratio

The theme of a high student-to-advisor ratio underscores a critical challenge in academic advising and mentoring. With a disproportionate number of students per advisor, the capacity for personalized guidance diminishes significantly. This situation forces advisors to adopt a more transactional approach, focusing on essential academic requirements rather than providing comprehensive and individualized support. The consequences of this high ratio include limited time for in-depth discussions on students'

academic and career goals, potentially hindering the development of meaningful advising relationships. Addressing this challenge is paramount to enhancing the quality and effectiveness of advising, as it directly influences the depth and personalization of support that students receive during their academic journey.

Lack of Professional Development

The theme of the lack of professional development in academic advising and

mentoring underscores a critical challenge that can impact the quality of support provided to students. Without standardized training and continuous professional development opportunities, advisors may face difficulties adapting to the evolving needs of diverse student populations. In a rapidly changing educational landscape, ongoing training is essential to keep advisors informed about best practices, emerging trends, and effective mentoring strategies. The absence of professional development can hinder the ability of advisors to provide relevant and timely guidance, potentially affecting the overall effectiveness of academic advising. Prioritizing continuous training programs is vital for ensuring that advisors are equipped with the necessary skills to address the multifaceted aspects of student success.

Limited Resources and Infrastructure

The theme of limited resources and infrastructure in academic advising and mentoring points to a systemic challenge that can impede the implementation of comprehensive support services. Inadequate resources hinder the capacity to establish robust advising programs, restricting the ability to cater effectively to the diverse needs of students. Insufficient infrastructure may result in a lack of access to essential tools and technologies that could enhance the efficiency and accessibility of advising services. Addressing this challenge requires strategic resource allocation and investment in infrastructure to create an environment conducive to effective academic advising and mentoring. A commitment to providing the necessary resources is fundamental for universities to deliver holistic support to their student populations.

Communication and Coordination Issues

The theme of communication and coordination issues in academic advising and mentoring highlights a systemic challenge that can lead to disjointed support systems for students. When there is a lack of effective collaboration among advisors, mentors, faculty members, and administrative staff, students may face conflicting advice or difficulties in accessing the

right resources. This challenge underscores the importance of fostering a culture of communication and coordination among all stakeholders involved in student support. A seamless flow of information and a well-coordinated approach are essential for providing consistent and comprehensive guidance to students. Institutions must prioritize effective communication strategies to ensure that all components of the advising and mentoring process work together cohesively.

Diversity and Turnover

The theme of diversity and turnover in academic advising and mentoring highlights two interconnected challenges. Firstly, the lack of diversity among advisors may lead to unintended biases in guidance, potentially hindering the inclusivity of the advising process. Advisors from diverse backgrounds bring varied perspectives that are key in understanding and addressing the unique needs of a diverse student population. Secondly, the turnover of advising staff introduces instability, disrupting the establishment of long-term advising relationships. This inconsistency may impact the continuity of support, as each new advisor may bring different approaches and styles. Fostering diversity and stability among advising staff is essential for creating an inclusive and effective advising environment.

Discussion

The findings of this study shed light on the current landscape of academic advising and mentorship in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan, offering valuable insights into students' perceptions. The overall positive responses, with mean scores ranging from 4.32 to 4.43 on a 5-point scale, indicate a strong agreement among participants regarding the impact of advising and mentorship on various aspects of academic and personal development. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the vital role of advising and mentorship in fostering student success (Drake et al., 2010; Creamer et al., 2018). Particularly noteworthy is the acknowledgment that advising significantly influences course selection and positively impacts academic achievements, emphasizing

the multifaceted role of these support mechanisms beyond traditional guidance. The regression analysis reinforces the significance of advising and mentoring in predicting student success. Both variables exhibit positive and statistically significant relationships with student success, highlighting their predictive power in explaining variations in academic outcomes. These quantitative findings complement the qualitative insights gained through the thematic analysis, which revealed several challenges in the current advising and mentoring landscape.

Key challenges identified include a high student-to-advisor ratio, a lack of professional development opportunities for advisors, limited resources and infrastructure, communication and coordination issues, and concerns related to diversity and turnover among advising staff. These challenges necessitate strategic interventions to enhance the effectiveness of student support systems in private universities in Lahore. Recommendations include exploring strategies to reduce the student-to-advisor ratio, prioritizing ongoing professional development for advisors, allocating resources strategically, improving communication and coordination among stakeholders, and promoting diversity while minimizing turnover among advising staff.

While the positive perceptions underscore the impactful role of advising and mentorship in student experiences, addressing the identified challenges is decisive for ensuring the continued effectiveness of these support mechanisms. The recommendations provided aim to guide institutions in navigating these challenges, ultimately contributing to the holistic development and success of students in the unique context of Pakistani higher education. The study contributes not only to the localized understanding of advising and mentoring but also adds to the broader scholarship on effective student support mechanisms in diverse educational settings.

Conclusion

This research sheds light on the state of academic advising and mentoring in private universities in Lahore, Pakistan, filling a critical gap in the

existing literature. The overwhelmingly positive perceptions of students regarding the impact of these support mechanisms on their academic and personal development underscore their significance. The regression analysis establishes the predictive power of both advising and mentoring in determining student success.

However, the study reveals challenges such as a high student-to-advisor ratio, lack of professional development, limited resources, communication issues, and concerns related to diversity and turnover among advising staff. Addressing these challenges is critical for institutions to enhance the effectiveness of their support systems.

The recommendations derived from the findings offer actionable insights for private universities in Lahore, emphasizing the importance of reducing the student-to-advisor ratio, investing in professional development, strategic resource allocation, fostering effective communication, and promoting diversity among advising staff. This research contributes not only to the localized understanding of academic advising and mentoring in Pakistan but also provides valuable insights for global discussions on effective student support mechanisms. By bridging the research gap and offering practical recommendations, this study aims to empower institutions to refine their practices, ultimately enriching the educational experience for students in private universities in Lahore and beyond.

Recommendations

Hire more advisors to reduce the ratio, enabling personalized guidance and fostering meaningful advising relationships.

Provide continuous training for advisors and mentors to stay updated on best practices and effectively meet the evolving needs of diverse students.

Invest in infrastructure, technology, and support services to create an environment conducive to effective academic advising and mentoring.

Foster a culture of effective communication among all stakeholders involved in student support to prevent conflicting advice and enhance support.

Actively promote diversity among advising staff

to bring unique insights and understanding vital for addressing diverse student needs.

Implement strategies to enhance advisor retention, creating a stable advising staff for continuity in support and relationships.

Encourage mentorship programs that extend beyond academic departments to broaden students' perspectives.

Establish mechanisms for regularly assessing and adapting advising practices based on student feedback and evolving needs.

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