



Undergraduates' Perception on Counselling: A Case of Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna

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Abstract

Wide spreading of unrest and psychological distress among the university students motivates this study to explore undergraduates' perception on counselling, to see the compatibility of students' expectation and the provision of counselling service and to suggest recommendations for implementing student-centric counselling service in the university system with special reference to Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna. A pre-tested questionnaire was distributed among 200 randomly selected students from different batches to get their views on counselling. Descriptive analysis was done to analyse data by using SPSS (Version 22). All variables were measured by 05-point Likert scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. Results showed that among the respondents, 69% were aware that the counselling is practicing in the faculty while 31% of students were unaware. Majority of respondents (70%) expect mental support/stress relief while getting solutions for their day-to-day problems through counselling followed by career and academic guidance (5.5%), encouragement, and motivation (13.5%), and problem solving (11%). Even though the majority recognized the importance (97%) of counselling and highly recommended (82%) the need of it in the university system, some were unsatisfied (20%) and neutral (28%) with the prevailing system. In fact, ANOVA revealed that the gender was insignificant in students' satisfaction on Counselling ($F= 2.82$; $P= 0.095$). Majority (59%) suggested getting students' concern while selecting counsellors as they face some problems in the present system. Surprisingly, even a single student was unable to list out the names of all counsellors attached to the faculty, and some named the academic members' names who are not counsellors at all. Students suggested some innovative suggestions to improve student counselling at the faculty and requested providing professional counsellors' service. Moreover, students requested to have awareness trainings/ workshops on students' counselling. Present study recommends considering these suggestions to promote students' personal development and psychological well-being in particular through counselling.

Keywords: *Counselling, Faculty of Agriculture, Perception, Psychological Well-being.*

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