



The Overlooked Dimension: Perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counselling

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Abstract

The present study explores the perspectives of undergraduate Psychology students on the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling. The study was conducted through a qualitative descriptive survey with 100 students from four colleges in the Kolkata and Howrah regions, using stratified random and simple random sampling. A self-made standardized questionnaire was developed. Its content validity and Reliability (Cronbach Alpha value- .71) were checked. Percentage, Mean, SD, t-test, and ANOVA were used for data analysis. The result revealed that about half of the respondents (48%) had a low level of perception regarding the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling. A significant difference was observed in the perception of philosophical approaches in educational counselling among psychology students, based on habitat area and educational background, with no gender-specific difference. Urban students and those from an Arts background showed a higher level of perception in this area. To develop students' conceptual understanding, Philosophy and Psychology should be integrated. Recommendations are needed to enhance counselling training and also to strengthen interdisciplinary engagement.



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Introduction

Though different in orientation, Philosophy and Psychology both share a type of intellectual connection. Through various methodological lenses, both disciplines explore human cognition, behaviour, values, and meaning-making. Empirical approaches are used in Psychology to understand the functioning of human beings, while Philosophy offers ethical reflection, critical reasoning, and conceptual clarity. Today, various philosophical approaches, such as moral reasoning, reflective enquiry, logic-based analysis, and existential questioning, have gained prominence in educational counselling. It provides counselors with a deeper level of knowledge to address students' confusion and dilemmas in academic choices, values, life purposes, and identity. Instead of all these, the perception of psychology students toward the use of philosophical approaches in counselling remains an unexplored domain. If future counselors are open to philosophical approaches, then only the interdisciplinary approach combining Philosophy and Psychology can be used in the educational arena. Examining these perceptions helps expose gaps in exposure, professional readiness, and curriculum. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to examine the conceptual understanding of psychology students regarding integrating philosophical approaches in educational counseling, based on gender, academic qualifications, and habitat area. The findings can show a proper path to the future curriculum makers, educational institutions, and teacher educators to enhance training related to philosophical counselling. Highlighting various socio-educational factors useful for understanding students' acceptance of philosophical approaches, a broader dialogue can be developed by integrating philosophical thinking into counselling pedagogy.

Statement of the Problem

Philosophy and Psychology, though they have different orientations, are closely connected. Various studies have observed their interdependence and reciprocity. So, the researcher wants to measure psychology students' perceptions of the use of philosophical approaches in Educational Counseling. Henceforth, the title of the study has been framed as - *'The Overlooked Dimension: Perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counselling.'*

Objectives

To find out the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

To understand if there was any significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on gender.

To know if there was any significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on habitat area.

To find out if there was any significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students coming from various backgrounds of study about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

Hypotheses

Psychology Students had a positive perception about using Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on gender.

There was no significant difference in Psychology Students' perspectives on Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling across habitat areas.

There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students from various study backgrounds regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

Definition of the Operational Terms

i) Overlooked Dimension-

It refers to an aspect of a situation that is not considered, included, or noticed. Here, in this study, the discussion focuses on the perspectives of Psychology students on using philosophical approaches in educational counselling.

ii) Perspectives-

Perspective is the ability to think about a situation or problem in a reasonable and wise way.

iii) Psychology Students-

Psychology students refer to undergraduate psychology students from four different colleges in the Kolkata and Howrah regions.

iv) Philosophical Approaches-

Philosophical approaches refer to the philosophical ways of using values, ethical approaches, life awareness, etc.

v) Educational Counseling-

Educational counselling is the process in which a counsellor helps students understand social, academic, and personal issues through a supportive, reassuring relationship.

Delimitations

- The study was delimited to 100 samples from four colleges in Howrah and Kolkata regions.
- All the samples were taken from the undergraduate level.
- Only the Psychology students were taken here.
- Gender, Habitat area, and Background of studies were treated as categorical variables.

Significance of the Study

- As the study integrates philosophical, as well as psychological practices, it paves the way for enhancing interdisciplinary counselling education.
- Curriculum development, with improved course design, can be based on identifying gaps in students' exposure to philosophical concepts of counselling.
- The students can also be professionally prepared to become better future counselors.
- Targeted educational interventions were designed to understand students' perceptions of socio-educational differences.
- It encourages various self-reflection processes among students, such as ethics, meaning, and values, which are key components of effective counselling.

Reviews of Related Literature

Corlet. et al. (2024) conducted a study to understand university students' approach to online counselling. A questionnaire was developed and standardized. This descriptive survey was analysed using inferential statistics, which showed that the students liked online counselling for its flexibility and convenience, but expressed concerns about trust, discomfort, and a lack of personal information. Male students were more likely to seek online counseling than their female counterparts. Policymakers and educational institutions may have gained insight from this study. Khatun (2024) conducted a study to find out the combined impact of philosophical and psychological counselling on technology integration in education. Technology raises anxiety and stress among students as well as teachers. Philosophical intervention was useful for fostering ethical awareness and critical engagement, while psychological counselling was useful for reducing resistance and anxiety. So, interdisciplinary activities combining both areas in developing educational technology can be a great help. Knapp & Tjeltveit (2005) conducted a study to examine how various educational counsellors critically evaluated the scope of practice, training curriculum, evidence of effectiveness, methods, and code of ethics of philosophy in helping individuals or groups in practical work. This study discusses the need to understand and evaluate individual philosophical counselors' potential to use philosophy in helping clients in need. Meera (1989) in her study discussed the theoretical as well as philosophical aspects of psychology and how, in everyday life, such skills are necessary. Careful amalgamation of Science related to Psychology and theory related to Philosophy can lead to a great future. Richardson (2023) conducted a study to find out the impact of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) as a psychological therapy model and Logic-Based Therapy (LBT) on the subjects who were suffering from moral injuries like shame, spiritual crisis, guilt, etc. The literature review-based analysis proved the effectiveness of these therapies in the past, and they conducted an experiment with these two therapies, providing a positive result. Rho (2013) conducted a study to examine the Philosophy and focus of counsellors in the counselling approach. Various literature reviews and theses were analysed. The result indicated that philosophy depends on social constructivism, positive psychology, and effects. In contrast, counsellors viewed counselling as a minute attitude observation and as being the partner and coach of the client in need. Sheikh (2024) conducted a study to examine the effects of various philosophy-related counselling interventions on nurses. As nurses are there to look after not only the physical but also the mental health of patients, through a case study, the researcher found that philosophical counselling techniques positively influence the mental well-being of the subjects. Shreelakshmi et al. (2023) in their study used the Attitude towards Seeking Professional Help Scale and a peer-reviewed questionnaire to understand the attitude of students who went through counselling during the school period and the students who did not have such an experience. The t-test showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in their attitudes towards counselling, but there was a significant difference in their attitudes towards counsellors. Waitzman (2024) conducted a study to identify the role of philosophical counselling in addressing various life challenges and in developing personal resilience. Philosophical approaches such as Socratic Philosophy, Existentialism, and Stoicism were used, and based on them, a philosophical counselling model was prepared. A systematic literature analysis was also done. After applying the model to real respondents, it was shown that the manageability dimension

improved. So, it was proved that philosophical counselling can strengthen personal resilience by improving the understanding of life situations and providing them with meaning.

Methodology

i) Variables

Perception of Psychology Students using philosophical approaches in educational counselling was regarded as the dependent variable, and Psychology students were regarded as the independent variable. Gender, habitat area, and the background of the study were treated as categorical variables in this study.

ii) Samples

A total of 100 samples were taken in this study. 25 samples from each undergraduate college were selected. As this was a quantitative study, a probability sampling technique was used. First of all, four colleges of the Kolkata and Howrah region were selected by Stratified Random Sampling. Then, 25 Psychology students were selected from each college by simple random sampling, for a total of 100.

Categorical Variables	Number of Samples
Male Psychology Students	65
Female Psychology Students	95
Urban Psychology Students	42
Rural Psychology Students	58
Students from Science Background	30
Students from Arts Background	43
Students from Other Backgrounds	27

iii) Research Design

The researcher used a quantitative descriptive survey in this study. A self-made questionnaire (Consisting of 25 items) was standardized by testing the content Validity (Checked by three subject experts) and also by checking the reliability by Cronbach Alpha (.71). After administering the questionnaire on 100 samples, the data were analysed through Percentage, Mean, SD, t-test, and ANOVA.

Hypothesis-I

Psychology Students had a Positive Perception of Using Philosophical Approaches in Educational Counseling.

Table-1

Levels of Perception	Percentage of Perception
High	23%
Medium	29%
Low	48%

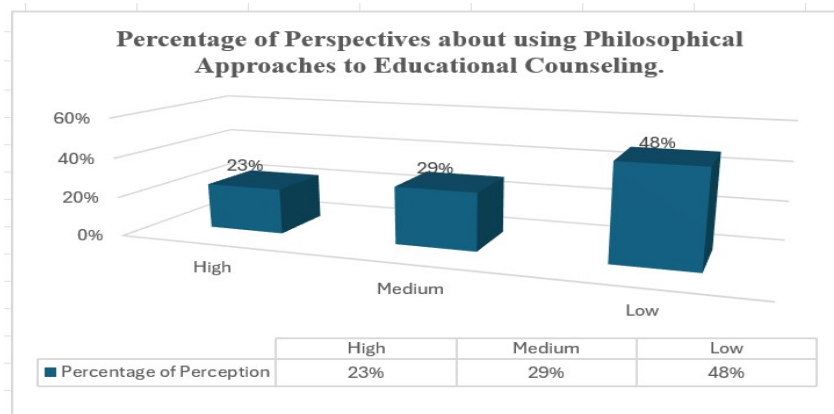


Chart 1: Describing the Percentage of Perception about using Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling

Table 1 and Chart 1 describe the percentage of Psychology students' perception of using philosophical approaches in educational counselling. Most Psychology students (48%) had a low level of perception of the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling, while 29% had a medium level and 23% had a high level.

Hypothesis II

There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on gender.

Table-2

Gender	Total Number of trainee teachers	Mean	SD	T test
Male Psychology Students	39	23.12	3.05	0.5061
Female Psychology Students	61	23.45	3.26	

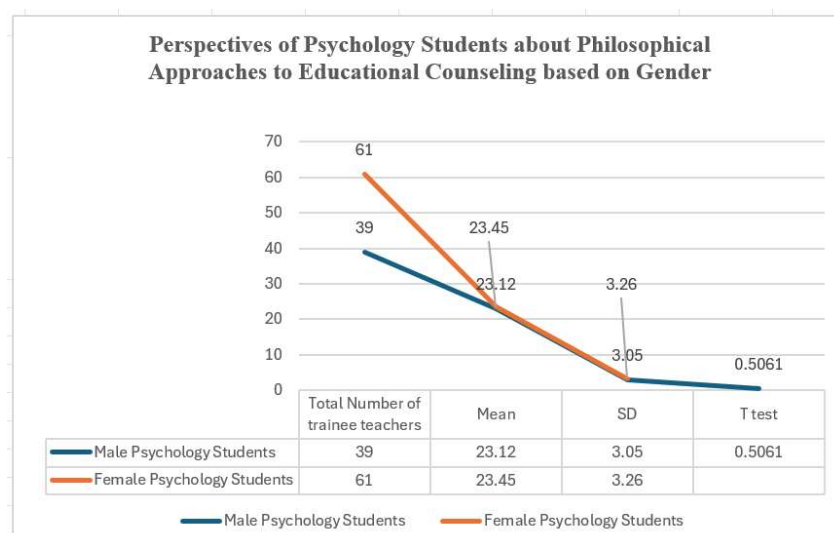


Chart- 2 describing Perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on Gender

Table 2 and Chart 2 indicate that the mean gained score (23.12) for male Psychology students was lower than that of female Psychology students (23.45). The table t value 0.5061 was lower

than the table t value 1.96 at 98 degrees of freedom at the 0.05 level of significance. Henceforth, the hypothesis was accepted, and it was shown that there was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling by gender.

Hypothesis III

There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on habitat area.

Table-3

Habitat Area	Total Number of trainee teachers	Mean	SD	T test
Urban Psychology Students	42	27.56	3.89	5.9236
Rural Psychology Students	58	23.41	3.11	

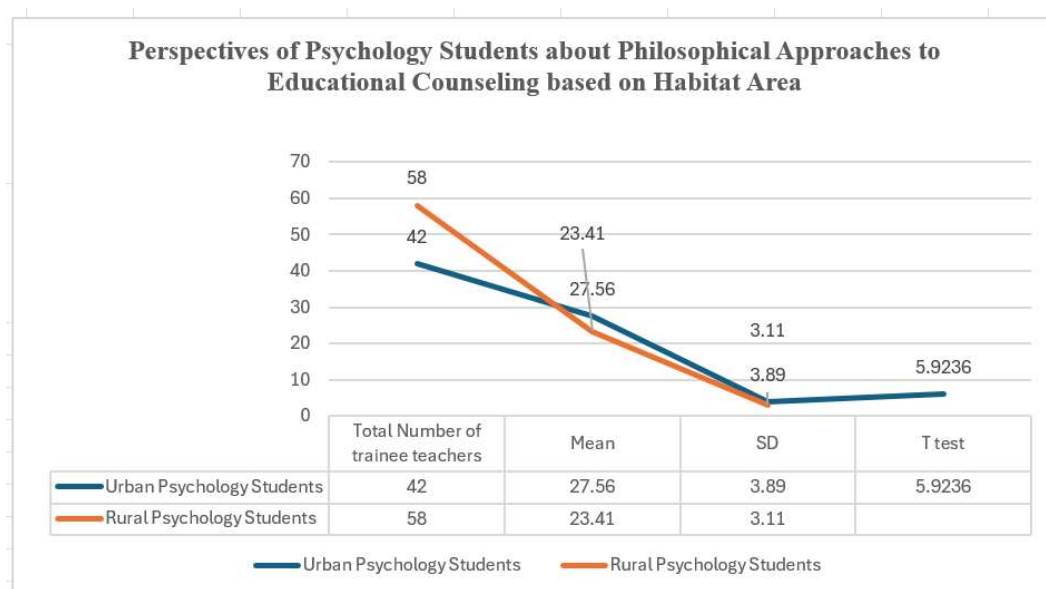


Chart- 3 describing Perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on Habitat Area

Table 3 and Chart 3 show that the mean gained score (27.56) of urban psychology students was higher than the mean gained score (23.41) of rural psychology students. The table t value 5.9236 was higher than the table t value 1.96 at 98 degrees of freedom at a 0.05 level of significance. Henceforth, the hypothesis was rejected, and it was demonstrated that there was a significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling across habitat areas.

Hypothesis IV

There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students from various study backgrounds regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

Table-4

Samples	Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F value	P value
Psychology Students coming from Science Background	Between Groups	254.54	2	122.77	9.63	<0.05
Psychology Students coming from Arts Background	Within Groups	1236.54	97	12.75		
Psychology Students coming from Other Backgrounds	Corrected Total	1482.08	99			

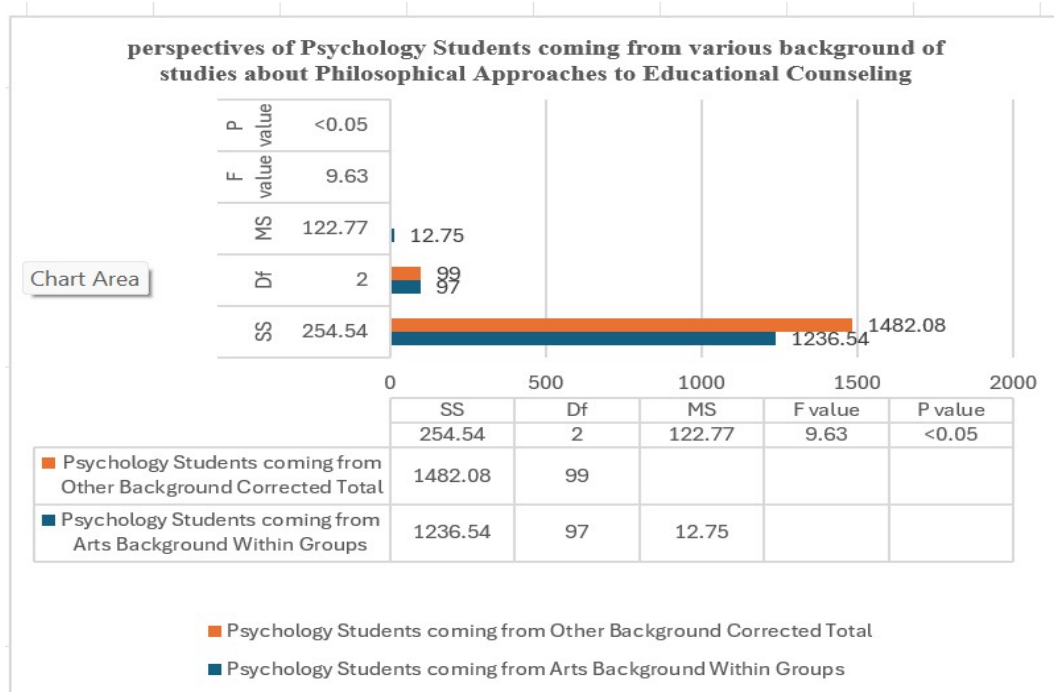


Chart 4 describing perspectives of Psychology Students coming from various backgrounds of studies about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling

Table 4 and Chart 4 describe that the F value (9.63) was greater than the critical f value at 0.05 and the df (2,97). A p-value less than 0.05 indicates a significant difference. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant mean difference. Therefore, based on the ANOVA results, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students from various study backgrounds regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.

Findings

- Most Psychology students (48%) had a low level of awareness of the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling. 29% of Psychology students had a medium level of

perception of the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling, and 23% had a high level of perception.

- There was no significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on gender.
- There was a significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students about Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling based on habitat area.
- Urban Psychology students can have greater access to and understanding of philosophical approaches in educational counselling, as they are more likely to encounter technological advancements, new research, and discoveries that can lead them to see that philosophical concepts can also be applied in counselling.
- There was a significant difference in the perspectives of Psychology Students from various study backgrounds regarding Philosophical Approaches to Educational Counseling.
- Students from an Arts background had a high perception of using Philosophical approaches in educational counselling, as they may have a clear understanding of philosophical ideas. Thus, they can understand the importance of various Philosophical approaches in educational counselling. In contrast, the Science students had the lowest perception of these concepts due to their limited exploration of them.

Conclusion

The study uncovered noteworthy insights into the perspectives of Psychology students regarding the assimilation of various philosophical approaches in educational counselling. The percentage analysis revealed that about half of the samples had a low perception of the integration of philosophy into educational counselling, indicating an inadequate understanding of its relevance. The gender of the samples did not show any difference in perception, whereas academic background and habitat area did. Due to prior exposure to various philosophical contexts and greater access to academic resources, students from Arts and urban backgrounds showed a higher level of appreciation for the use of philosophical approaches in educational counselling. So, if there can be an interdisciplinary system of education that combines philosophical and psychological approaches, reasoning ability, the ability to navigate various life questions, and ethical sensitivity can be improved. It is the need of the hour that educational institutions arrange various curricular and co-curricular activities to encourage philosophical enquiry within educational counselling training. From the study, it can be concluded that broadening psychology students' understanding of philosophical counselling will lead to more critical, reflective, and holistic counselling practices. A combination of both disciplines in the future can support learners' emotional, academic, and existential growth and development.

Recommendations and suggestions

- Various interdisciplinary modules combining Psychology and Philosophy can be introduced at the school and college level.
- Workshops can be organised on various philosophical counselling approaches, such as Stoicism, Socratic Dialogue, and Existentialism.
- Case studies supervised philosophical counselling sessions, and case studies should be used to provide experiential learning opportunities.

- Faculty training should be provided to teachers to model the integration of various philosophical thinking into the counselling process.
- Research engagement among the students should be traversed to explore various philosophical applications in real-world counselling circumstances.

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