

Improving the Quality of Higher Education for Students with Disability in Universities of Pakistan

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Abstract : In Pakistan, the inclusion of persons with disabilities in higher education institutions has significantly been increased with every passing year and anyone can observe a sizeable number of these students in each faculty. The study executes to conduct a baseline survey for measuring faculty understanding about the special needs, experiences of students with disabilities and support provided by university administration in order to teach these students effectively. The researcher has used mixed methods and the University of Karachi was selected through non-probability-based sampling method. This university is one of the largest universities in Pakistan where more than 40,000 students have been enrolled. Data was gathered through a questionnaire and focused group discussion from three stakeholders including students with disabilities, faculty members and members of the university administration. The key findings show that students with disabilities experience a number of problems related to accommodating their special needs. However, the most encouraging factors identified are the attitude, support, and motivation they received from various faculty members and university administration. On the basis of the findings of the study the researcher has prepared a faculty guidebook and established a 'Model Learning Assistance Centre for Students with Disabilities' in the Department of Special Education, University of Karachi. Both these efforts will be helpful for improving the support services for students with disabilities to strengthen the existing laws, policies, and practices in institutions of higher education.

Keywords : persons with disabilities, higher education, learning assistance center, faculty guidebook

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