

**Examining the Correlation of Secondary School's College Counseling Service on
University Readiness: A Quantitative Study**

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Dear Manas Zhumashov:

This letter now confirms that your research project titled: “**Investigating the Impact of College Counseling Services on University Readiness**” has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Aisi Li

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Abstract

This thesis examines the influence of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year university students. Utilizing a quantitative survey method, the study collected data from 60 participants across various universities in Kazakhstan and abroad, employing a mix of convenience and purposive sampling techniques. The research focused on assessing how counseling services contribute to aspects of university readiness such as academic preparedness and social integration. The findings indicated that students who actively engaged with college counseling services reported varied levels of readiness, highlighting significant differences based on whether students were attending universities domestically or abroad. Particularly, students aiming for education overseas exhibited higher engagement with counseling services but reported lower satisfaction levels, suggesting a potential mismatch between service provision and the specific needs of these students. Moreover, a substantial proportion of the student sample sought additional external support for university preparation, pointing to perceived gaps in the efficacy of school-provided services. This trend underscores a crucial demand for more specialized and personalized counseling approaches, especially for students pursuing education outside their home countries. The study acknowledges limitations including the small sample size and the non-random sampling method, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to involve larger, more diverse populations and to incorporate mixed methods to better capture the complexities of college counseling's impact on university readiness. This thesis may contribute to the understanding of the pivotal role of college counseling services and calls for enhanced strategies to better meet the diverse needs of students transitioning to higher education.

Keywords: college counseling and readiness, professional coordination, university readiness

Аннотация

Данная диссертация исследует влияние услуг профориентации на готовность к университетской жизни среди студентов первого и второго курсов. С помощью количественного опроса собраны данные от 60 участников из различных университетов Казахстана и за рубежом. Основное внимание уделено оценке вклада профориентационных услуг в академическую подготовку и социальную адаптацию студентов. Результаты показывают, что студенты, участвующие в программах профориентации, отмечают различные уровни готовности, особенно в контексте образования за границей, где удовлетворенность услугами ниже, что указывает на несоответствие услуг потребностям. Многие студенты также ищут внешнюю поддержку, подчеркивая необходимость улучшенной и более персонализированной подготовки к университету. Несмотря на ограничения, включая небольшой размер выборки и использование удобного отбора, исследование подчеркивает значимость услуг профориентации и необходимость дальнейших исследований для более глубокого понимания этой темы. Диссертация предлагает стратегии для улучшения профориентационных услуг, чтобы лучше удовлетворять потребности студентов в подготовке к высшему образованию.

Ключевые слова: услуги профориентации и готовность, профессиональная координация, готовность к университету

Аннотация

Бұл диссертация бірінші және екінші курс студенттерінің университеттік өмірге дайындығына кәсіптік бағдар беру қызметтерінің әсерін зерттейді. Сандық сауалнама әдісін пайдалана отырып, зерттеу аясында ыңғайлы және мақсатты іріктеудің аралас әдісін қолдана отырып, Қазақстанның және шетелдің түрлі университеттерінен 60 қатысушыдан деректер жиналды. Зерттеу академиялық дайындық және әлеуметтік интеграция сияқты университетке дайындық қызметтерінің үлесін бағалауға бағытталған. Нәтижелер кәсіптік бағдар беру қызметтерімен белсенді әрекеттесетін студенттердің әртүрлі дайындық деңгейлері мен студенттердің ішкі немесе шетелдегі университеттерге баруына байланысты айтарлықтай айырмашылықтарды көрсетеді. Атап айтқанда, шетелде білім алуға ұмтылатын студенттер кәсіптік бағдар беру қызметтеріне көбірек қызығушылық танытады, алайда қанағаттанудың төмен деңгейлері туралы хабарлайды, бұл көрсетілетін қызметтер мен осы студенттердің нақты қажеттіліктері арасындағы сәйкессіздікті көрсетеді.

Сонымен қатар, студенттер үлгісінің едәуір бөлігі университетке дайындалу үшін қосымша сыртқы қолдауды іздеді, бұл мектеп ұсынатын қызметтердің тиімділігіндегі кемшіліктерді көрсетті.

Зерттеу нәтижелердің толық және жалпы болуына мақсатында ауқымды және жан-жақты популяциялардың қатысуымен болашақ зерттеулер жүргізу және университетке дайындыққа кәсіптік бағдарлау қызметтерінің әсерінің күрделілігін жақсы түсіну үшін аралас әдістерді енгізу ұсынылады.

Бұл диссертация кәсіптік бағдарлау қызметтерінің негізгі рөлін түсінуге үлес қосады және студенттердің жоғары білімге көшудегі әртүрлі қажеттіліктерін тиімдірек қанағаттандыру стратегияларын жақсартуға шақырады.

Кілт сөздер: кәсіптік бағдарлау қызметтері және дайындық, кәсіби үйлестіру, университетке дайындық

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background Information

In the realm of global education, college counseling is recognized as an essential service that supports students through the college application and enrollment processes.

Engberg & Wolniak (2010) note that this type of counseling covers a broad spectrum of services, such as academic planning, career exploration, and guidance on financial aid. This comprehensive support is critical as students navigate the increasingly complex pathways to higher education and career decision-making, which are often influenced by rapid changes in the global educational and labor markets. Gati, Amir, and Landman (2010) observed that the ever-changing dynamics of these markets drive numerous students to seek guidance to more effectively navigate and handle the wide array of choices and obstacles they encounter.

Transitioning to the context of Kazakhstan, the concept of college counseling takes a distinct form, commonly referred to as career guidance. According to Abden (2019), The Deputy of the Maslikhat of Astana, founder of the public association "Қазаққызы," (Qazaqqyzy, "Kazakh Girl") and chairman of the Association of Private Preschool Organizations of Astana, stated that career orientation is the key step towards a successful future for our children.

According to Ashimkhanova & Kaldybaeva (2016):

Following the dissolution of the USSR, Kazakhstan experienced the collapse of its labor education and professional orientation system in schools. This led to several significant issues, including a mismatch between the labor markets and the education system, a gap between the professional skills demanded and those being trained, uncertainty in career

choices among individuals, a shortage of necessary specialists, and a deficiency in job skills among professionals.

To navigate these challenges and provide guidance, college counseling services play a vital role (Paolini, 2019). These services offer knowledge, support, and resources related to college access and success, including application requirements, academic and professional goals, and researching colleges and financial aid options. Ashimkhanova and Kaldybaeva (2016) assert that the system of career guidance is crucial for the rational distribution of labor resources, assisting youth in choosing their life paths, and aiding their adaptation to their chosen professions. This emphasizes the crucial role of career orientation in guiding individuals towards suitable career choices and ensuring a harmonious match between labor supply and demand. By providing guidance and insights into various professions and career pathways, a well-established system of career orientation can aid young people in making informed decisions about their futures, ultimately contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the labor market. According to the College Board (2006), the objective of college counseling services is to foster a college-going culture and equip students to be "college ready."

College counselors typically hold many roles and responsibilities, and the counseling can be tailored for specific students. For instance, a first-generation student from a low-income background may need more in-depth knowledge about the application process for applying to college, a comprehensive overview of many platforms such as FAFSA, Common Application, and information on the resources and centers that are on-campus. They may also need an overview of the services that a college advising service can provide to them. According to the College Board (2006):

The notion that college follows high school can appear unattainable for students who come from any of the following backgrounds: low academic achievers, middle- to low-income families, underrepresented minorities, disabled youth, or households where no one has previously attended college (p. 2).

Conley (2007) defines college readiness as a concept that extends beyond mere academic preparedness. It includes a student's grasp of the culture and structure of postsecondary education, as well as familiarity with the intellectual norms and modes of understanding within that particular academic and social setting.

College readiness entails not only having the necessary knowledge and skills but also possessing the mindset and disposition to make the most out of the college experience. This definition emphasizes the importance of students being equipped with the cognitive and social abilities to navigate the complexities of higher education, adapt to new learning environments, and engage effectively with peers and faculty. Engberg & Wolniak (2010) describe readiness for higher education as the degree to which students have the academic, social, and emotional skills and knowledge required to achieve success in college. By recognizing the multifaceted nature of college readiness, college counseling services can strive to develop students' holistic preparedness for the academic and social aspects of postsecondary education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Kazakhstan, the lack of professional coordination in state schools has been a persistent issue that affects students' readiness for higher education (Balashkina & Dusembaev, 2021). Chukhray & Salazar (2019) note that marginalized groups, especially those from low-income backgrounds and first-generation students, are particularly vulnerable to this problem. Chukhray & Salazar (2019) point out that the absence of adequate platforms for providing information

leads to a lack of current and reliable data, which in turn causes misguidance and hinders a smooth transition from secondary school to university. As outlined in the 'Atlas of New Professions and Competencies,' a Kazakhstan scientific research journal focusing on in-demand and future professions, industry experts predict the emergence of a variety of new professions within the next 5 to 10 years (Atlas of Professions, n.d.). Kazakhstan faces a pressing issue within its education system and labor market - the inefficiency of the system for guiding school students towards their future careers. Consequently, this inefficiency results in systemic imbalances within the labor market, where there is a shortage of certain specialists while others are in excess supply and this dilemma ultimately leads to the deprofessionalization of certain fields and the expansion of a segment characterized by low-skilled labor (Atlas of Professions, n.d.). Addressing the challenges of professional orientation among school students is vital in order to align educational efforts with the evolving needs of the job market and foster a more balanced and skilled workforce in Kazakhstan's economy.

Chukhray & Salazar (2019) emphasize that the absence of appropriate platforms for information provision results in outdated and unreliable data, which contributes to misguidance and obstructs a smooth transition from secondary school to university. An alarming 87% of school students make their career choices based on the influence of their parents and school teachers, yet 75% of parents confess to having no clear idea of suitable professions for their children, and a staggering 90% of both students and parents are unaware of the most in-demand professions in the job market (Atlas of Professions, n.d.). It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents have never actively sought information regarding career guidance (Atlas of Professions, n.d.). Compounding these issues is the absence of adequate information or the ineffectiveness of existing methods and tools for career guidance. These challenges collectively

underline the pressing need for an improved and comprehensive approach to career orientation within the education system, one that empowers students and parents with the knowledge necessary for making informed career decisions in Kazakhstan.

One of the primary objectives of academic advising is to ensure students are well-prepared for higher education. Yet, students in Kazakhstan's state schools face a significant gap in college counseling services. As they approach their final year of high school, many students find themselves at a loss on where to turn for guidance, compounded by a lack of relevant knowledge and other pressing concerns among parents and schoolteachers.

According to Syzdykova (2018), the modern labor market and the contemporary education system in Kazakhstan are currently significantly imbalanced. The preparation of professionals in technical and vocational education (TiPO) and higher education institutions (VIZ) is conducted without considering the actual needs of the economy. This has led to a mismatch between the demand for certain specialists and the number of graduates in those fields (Syzdykova, 2018). The absence of a unified information environment for collaboration among representatives of different government bodies, the inaccessibility of existing information to a wide range of stakeholders, and the lack of open dialogue platforms have resulted in the majority of high school graduates choosing their professions "blindly," relying on advice from family and friends.

The condition of marginalized groups with low-income backgrounds and first-generation students is challenging. What is more, the lack of proper platforms providing information causes an absence of up-to-date and reliable data. The available evidence suggests that there is a struggle with limited documentation and/or accessibility of college application and enrollment rates as stated by Chukhray and Salazar (2019).

Continuing with this current lack of college advising services prevents readiness and causes misguidance. Consequences of not addressing the problem can lead to several barriers that prohibit them from opportunity to attend college, smooth transition from secondary school to university and being lots of ambitious students. Report of the Vice-minister of Science and Higher Education of Kazakhstan Kuanysh Yergaliyev, about university graduates who are not working by their specialization or unemployed being around 60% in Kazakhstan supports my observations regarding lack of professional coordination according to Balashkina and Dusembaev (2021). Implementing college advising can help students navigate psychological, structural, and financial obstacles by providing students with the support, information, and resources necessary to achieve their goals and eventually attend the right college.

1.3 Purpose statement and Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between college counseling services provided in high schools and students' readiness for universities. The study aimed to understand the impact of college counseling programs on students' knowledge, understanding, and readiness to pursue higher education

This study is guided by a central research question and supported by two subsidiary questions.

Central research question:

-Does the utilization of college counseling services in high school have a significant impact on students' university readiness compared to those who have not used these services?

Two subsidiary questions:

-Do students using counseling services better understand university academic expectations?

-Does counseling aid in developing social skills and a sense of belonging for smoother university social adjustment?

Hypothesis:

The null hypothesis was there was no significant difference in university readiness between students who have utilized college counseling services and those who have not. The alternative hypothesis was there was significant difference in university readiness between students who have utilized college counseling services and those who have not.

1.4 Significance

The significance of this study lies in addressing the existing gap in the context of Kazakhstan regarding the lack of valid literature and data on college counseling services in state schools. By filling this gap, the study can contribute to the understanding of the current state of college counseling and its importance in the educational system of Kazakhstan.

The findings and recommendations generated from this study can inform the guidelines for the development and improvement of college counseling programs in state schools. The study's outcomes can influence policy-making decisions and educational practices, leading to more effective and impactful college counseling services for students.

Moreover, the study has the potential to raise awareness among various stakeholders, including parents, school administrators, and the Ministry of Education, about the negative consequences of not addressing the problem of inadequate college counseling services. By highlighting the significance of college counseling in supporting students' educational aspirations and providing the necessary guidance and resources, the study can create a platform for dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to improve the college counseling landscape in Kazakhstan.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the current practices and challenges associated with college counseling in the context of Kazakhstan. It will serve as a foundation for future research on the role of college counseling in facilitating students' access to higher education and achieving their academic and career goals in the country.

1.5 Methodology

This study employs a quantitative, correlational, non-experimental, descriptive, cross-sectional research design to examine the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year university students. The methodology involves a combination of convenience and purposive sampling strategies to gather data from a diverse group of students, both those who have and have not received college counseling services. Data collection will be conducted through a self-administered online survey, distributed via social media platforms and alumni networks. The survey, available in English, Kazakh, and Russian, will capture insights into students' experiences with college counseling services and their perceived readiness for university. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques will be employed to analyze the data, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the relationships and impacts studied. This approach not only adheres to rigorous methodological standards but also respects the ethical considerations essential to conducting research with human subjects.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into six main chapters to explore the impact of college counseling services on university readiness comprehensively. The Introduction sets the stage by outlining the research questions and thesis structure. The Literature Review follows, delving into existing studies to frame the research within current knowledge and highlight gaps. The Methodology

chapter describes the quantitative research design and data collection strategies employed. Findings are presented next, detailing the results of the survey and their implications for student preparedness. The Discussion interprets these findings, contextualizing them within the broader literature and discussing their significance. Finally, the Conclusion summarizes the study's key insights, acknowledges its limitations, and suggests areas for future research, concluding with reflections on the implications for educational practice and policy. Each chapter is designed to build on the previous, ensuring a coherent and logical progression that enhances understanding of the central research topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the literature on the role of college counseling, encompassing both international and local contexts. The primary objective of this review is to provide an overview of the existing literature concerning the impact of professional coordination and the significance of providing proper career advising during the graduate year of students. The chapter is organized into four main sections: the role of counseling, the main stakeholders involved, the historical development of college counseling, and the specific context of Kazakhstan in relation to advising practices.

The first section focuses on the role of counseling and explores its multifaceted nature. It encompasses a wide range of responsibilities, including academic guidance, career exploration, college application support, and personal counseling. By examining the literature, this section highlights the importance of college counseling in assisting students in making informed decisions, developing necessary skills, and navigating the complex landscape of higher education.

The second section delves into the main stakeholders involved in the college counseling process. It explores the perspectives, expectations, and roles of various stakeholders, such as students, parents, school administrators, policymakers, and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Kazakhstan. Understanding the diverse perspectives of these stakeholders is crucial in shaping effective counseling practices and ensuring collaboration among key actors in supporting students' college and career readiness.

The third section provides a historical overview of the development of college counseling, tracing its evolution over time. It discusses key milestones, influential theories, and

paradigm shifts that have shaped the field. By examining the historical context, this section provides insights into the progression of counseling practices and the emergence of new approaches and techniques.

The fourth section focuses specifically on the context of Kazakhstan and its relation to college counseling. It examines the unique cultural, social, and educational factors that influence advising practices within the country. Additionally, it discusses any existing policies, initiatives, and challenges that impact the delivery of college counseling services in the Kazakhstani education system.

2.2 The Role of Counseling

The role of counseling in promoting college readiness and success among high school students is essential for their smooth transition to higher education. A school's college going culture plays a significant role in college preparation and enrollment rates (Bryan et al., 2015). College counseling services aim to provide students with the necessary guidance, resources, and support to navigate the complex college application process and make informed decisions about their educational and career pathways.

One critical aspect of effective college counseling is fostering a college-going culture within schools. As underscored by the Pathways to College Network, college-focused schools prioritize the creation of an environment where high expectations for college enrollment and success are instilled in all students (College Board, 2006). By nurturing a college-going culture, these schools aim to inspire students and cultivate a mindset that higher education is both attainable and beneficial for their future.

To support students in their college preparation journey, college counseling services provide various college-preparatory tools. These resources assist students and their families in

navigating the college application process, such as selecting appropriate courses, preparing for standardized tests, completing college applications, and exploring financial aid options. By equipping students with these essential tools, counseling services empower them to make well-informed choices and effectively navigate the college admissions process.

Creating an inclusive learning environment is another crucial aspect of college counseling. Recognizing and embracing students' social, cultural, and varied learning styles allows counselors to tailor their support to individual students' needs. By valuing diversity and acknowledging the strengths of each student, counselors can foster an inclusive atmosphere that supports students in their college exploration and application process.

Research by Engberg and Wolniak (2010) indicates that schools where counselors dedicate a significant portion of their time—over 50%—to college-related counseling experience higher college acceptance rates. This highlights the importance of allocating sufficient time and resources for college counseling within schools to effectively support students' college aspirations.

Robinson and Roksa (2016) highlight that students attending schools with a robust college-going culture are 1.6 times more likely to apply to four-year colleges than those at schools with a less pronounced college-going culture, emphasizing the culture's significant influence on students' college application behaviors. This underscores the critical role of the school environment and its emphasis on college readiness in shaping students' decisions and actions regarding higher education.

According to the College Board's Eight Components of College and Career Readiness (referenced in Gilfillan, 2018), enhancing college and career readiness is a key element of college counseling services. These components, including college aspirations, academic

planning, enrichment and extracurricular engagement, exploration and selection processes, assessments, affordability planning, admission processes, and transition support, provide a comprehensive framework for preparing students for the transition from high school to college enrollment (College Board, 2015). College counseling services play a vital role in guiding students through each of these components, ensuring they have the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to succeed in higher education.

Temirtau Industrial and Technological College (2016) also acknowledges the need for targeted career guidance amidst the evolving economic and political landscape. This entails understanding the changing dynamics of work, where increased intensity, pressure, and a demand for professionalism, endurance, and responsibility prevail (Itktemirtau, 2016). The key objectives include providing students with personalized career support, fostering a conscious attitude towards work, and facilitating their professional self-determination. To achieve these goals, the college aims to gather data on students' preferences, offer diverse specialized education, provide extra support to specific student groups, and establish flexible cooperation with external institutions and industries. Ultimately, the focus is on empowering students to make informed career choices in today's competitive job market (Itktemirtau, 2016).

In summary, the role of counseling in promoting college readiness encompasses fostering a college-going culture, providing college-preparatory tools, creating an inclusive learning environment, and addressing the components of college and career readiness. Effective counseling services aim to empower students, support their college aspirations, and equip them with the skills and resources needed for a successful transition to higher education.

2.3 The Main Stakeholders

The main stakeholders involved in college advising encompass various individuals and entities who play crucial roles in supporting students' college aspirations and promoting a college-going culture. These stakeholders include school/college counselors, teachers, parents, peers, school administration, and the Ministry of Education.

School/college counselors are at the forefront of college advising and have specialized training and expertise in guiding students through the college application process. According to Gilfillan (2018), they provide personalized support, offer information about college options, assist with college applications, and help students explore and identify potential career pathways. Gilfillan (2018) notes that school counselors are ideally situated to work alongside other stakeholders to foster a college-going culture both within the school and across the broader community.

Parents, although they may not possess extensive training in college advising, play a crucial role in supporting and encouraging their children's college aspirations. Taylor et al. (2024) emphasize that families, particularly parents and guardians, play a vital role in shaping their children's career ambitions and professional goals by engaging in discussions about college, setting expectations for higher education, and offering emotional support.

Although it was not specifically cited in previous studies, it can be inferred that the involvement of school administration, including principals and other school leaders, is crucial for the successful implementation of college advising efforts. They play a pivotal role in allocating resources, developing policies, and providing guidance to ensure that college advising aligns with the school's broader educational objectives and priorities. Collaboration between school

administration and college counseling professionals is therefore essential for the effective delivery of college advising programs.

Transitioning from the global perspective to the local context in Kazakhstan, it is evident that the Ministry of Education plays a pivotal role in advancing college advising initiatives nationwide. Mirroring global trends, the Ministry establishes policies, offers guidance, and allocates resources to support college counseling efforts within schools and educational institutions across the country. Starting from the 2022-2023 academic year, schools have introduced the role of career guidance teachers to provide students with direction. To support this effort, methodological recommendations are being developed for educators to effectively implement career guidance activities, drawing on international experience and local analysis to facilitate students' professional orientation (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022). The Ministry's involvement ensures a systematic and coordinated approach to college advising, aiming to enhance students' college readiness and access to higher education opportunities.

Collectively, these stakeholders form a collaborative network that supports students' college advising and fosters a college-going culture. By working together, they can provide students with comprehensive support, reliable information, and guidance to make informed decisions about their educational pathways and achieve success in higher education.

2.3 School Counselors

School counselors play a vital role in supporting students' college aspirations and creating opportunities for college access. Through their daily interactions with students, they provide academic, social-emotional, and career counseling services that contribute to a holistic approach to student development.

As outlined in the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 13, 2009, No. 338, Career Counselors play a crucial role in the educational system. They are responsible for organizing and overseeing career guidance activities within schools, aiding students in making well-informed career decisions, and providing essential support to both students and their parents or legal representatives. These professionals conduct diagnostic assessments to identify students' interests, offer psychological assistance, and arrange valuable excursions and meetings with professionals from various fields. Furthermore, according to the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 13, 2009, No. 338, Career Counselors continuously strive to enhance their own professional competence, maintain necessary documentation, and ensure the safety, health, and rights of children while adhering to safety and labor protection regulations. In essence, they serve as pivotal figures in guiding the future workforce towards fulfilling and suitable career choices.

Bryan et al. (2015) found that students who sought guidance from school counselors, especially by the 10th grade, demonstrated a higher likelihood of applying to college, underscoring the positive impact of school counselors on college application rates. This underscores the significant role that school counselors play in motivating and assisting students in navigating the college preparation process.

School counselors are uniquely positioned to enhance college attainment opportunities for students across all educational levels, from elementary through high school. As emphasized by Bryan et al. (2009) (as cited in Bryan et al., 2015), school counselors have the potential to cultivate a college-going culture within their schools. They offer a variety of counseling services that cater to students' academic needs, social-emotional well-being, and career exploration.

Through the integration of college-related information and activities into their daily interactions with students, school counselors create a supportive environment that promotes college readiness and aspirations (Bryan et al., 2015).

Acknowledging the crucial role of school counselors, former First Lady Michelle Obama, in a presentation at the 2014 American School Counselor Association (ASCA) national conference, emphasized the impact of their work. Mrs. Obama recognized school counselors as the individuals who plant the seeds about college as early as elementary and middle school, instilling the expectation that higher education is not the exception but the norm (ASCA, 2014).

In summary, school counselors have a multifaceted role in promoting college opportunity and access for students. They provide a wide range of counseling services and support students in their academic, social-emotional, and career development. Through their continuous engagement with students, school counselors contribute to building a college culture within schools, fostering a belief that higher education is attainable for all students. Their efforts have been shown to positively influence students' college application rates, emphasizing the significance of their role in guiding students towards successful college outcomes.

2.4 Parents

Parents also play a crucial role in supporting their children's college and career readiness, complementing the efforts of school counselors. While school counselors play a critical role in fostering college and career readiness, they cannot achieve this alone; parental involvement is crucial for providing comprehensive support (Bryan et al., 2015).

However, research suggests that parent involvement tends to wane in middle and high school settings, especially in activities related to preparing children for college and career transitions after high school (Bryan et al., 2015). Griffin, Hutchins, and Meece (2011) found that

parents who are often perceived as uninvolved in their children's education are actually actively engaged and hold high expectations for their children's futures. It is essential to recognize the significance of this population and address their role in supporting their children's educational journey. This highlights the need to actively engage and consult parents to ensure their involvement in supporting their children's college aspirations.

Parental involvement has been consistently linked to various factors that contribute to academic success and better educational outcomes. Epstein & Van Voorhis (2010) demonstrated that increased parental involvement is linked to higher school attendance, improved graduation rates, better student grades, and enhanced achievement test scores. Henderson & Mapp (2002) found that active parental involvement also leads to improvements in students' social behavior and positive interactions with their peers.

By actively participating in their children's education and engaging in college and career conversations, parents can provide valuable support and guidance. Henderson & Mapp (2002) note that parental involvement can encompass a range of supportive activities such as discussing college options, assisting with college applications and financial aid processes, attending college fairs and information sessions, and encouraging their children's educational aspirations..

Bryan et al. (2015) highlight that counselors recognize the importance of collaborating with various stakeholders, including school personnel, families, and community members, to leverage community resources and support students' college aspirations. School counselors can facilitate parent involvement by providing resources, hosting workshops, and establishing open lines of communication. By working together, school counselors and parents can create a supportive network that nurtures students' college aspirations and equips them with the necessary tools and information for successful transitions to higher education and future careers. Hines et al.

(2019) emphasize that with support from key stakeholders such as administrators, teachers, and parents, school counselors and school psychologists can collaborate effectively to enhance students' college and career readiness.

2.5 The History of College Counseling

Although college advising is a relatively recent development in Kazakhstan, its roots can be traced back to the early 20th century. Campbell and Dahir (1997, p. 21) note that the field of counseling and guidance originated in the 1920s with the principal goal of helping students make informed career choices and secure appropriate placements. However, even before that, the foundations of vocational counseling were laid by pioneers such as Frank Parsons in the late 1800s. Campbell and Dahir (1997) explain that Parsons' pioneering efforts greatly influenced the field by introducing the concepts of career counseling, interventions, and research, thereby laying the foundation for the modern development of college counseling. This historical perspective highlights the progressive evolution of counseling practices and the ongoing commitment to supporting students in their educational and career endeavors.

2.6 The Context of Kazakhstan in relation to College Counseling.

College counseling is a relatively new concept in the educational landscape of Kazakhstan. The introduction of college counseling in the country can be traced back to the establishment of private international schools such as Miras International School in 1999 and Haileybury School in 2008 in Almaty (Miras, Haileybury Almaty, n.d., as cited in Rysbergen, 2017). However, it is important to note that these schools cater to a small number of students due to their high tuition fees, and their primary purpose is to provide education to a privileged group rather than addressing the broader issues in the educational field by disseminating best practices.

According to Syzdykova (2018), in the Republic of Kazakhstan, it is not entirely clear which government department is responsible for and carries out career guidance activities – whether it falls under the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) or the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development (MHSD). As a result, representatives from these ministries often redirect inquiries to one another and may not have complete information about what is happening in different regions of the country concerning career guidance.

Abden (2019) pointed out that in Kazakhstan, discussions about the professional orientation of school students have only just begun, and substantial and serious steps in this direction have yet to be taken. Neither in preschools nor in general education schools is there any systematic work being done in terms of career diagnostics for children (Abden, 2019). Furthermore, educators lack awareness of the labor market's current dynamics: they are not familiar with the professions that are currently in demand and necessary, nor are they adequately informed about new, contemporary professions (National Academies of Sciences, 2020). The field of career guidance remains underdeveloped, even within professional educational institutions.

Syzdykova (2018) emphasized that since 2015, the government has actively engaged in the implementation of the "100 конкретных шагов" (100 specific steps) national plan, which aligns with the principles of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015. According to the The program of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2015), ensuring equal access to education, developing a competitive human capital for the country's economic well-being, and achieving a high level of quality higher education that meets the labor market's demands are the main objectives of state strategies, the National Plan, and the Education-2020 development program. In this context, the development of a professional

orientation system in schools lays the foundation for enhancing the country's human resource potential and plays a pivotal role in shaping the future labor market.

Consequently, the larger issue of students facing difficulties in making career decisions remained unaddressed. Inappropriate career choices have far-reaching consequences, including university dropouts, skills mismatch, and imbalances in the labor market. To mitigate these challenges, it becomes essential to offer comprehensive college counseling programs in mainstream schools throughout Kazakhstan.

By implementing college counseling programs in mainstream schools, the educational system can proactively anticipate and address the existing issues related to career decision-making. Providing students with the necessary guidance and resources can help them make informed choices about their educational and career pathways. Moreover, by promoting a college-going culture and supporting students in their college aspirations, the broader goal of achieving educational and career success for all students can be pursued.

In summary, although the concept of college counseling is relatively new in Kazakhstan, recognizing its importance and integrating it into mainstream schools is crucial to tackle the challenges associated with career decision-making. By offering comprehensive college counseling programs, the educational system can empower students, mitigate the consequences of inappropriate career choices, and ultimately contribute to a more balanced and successful workforce in the country.

2.7 Summary

The literature review highlights the role of college counseling in promoting university awareness and readiness, focusing on the specific context of Kazakhstan. It emphasizes the importance of counseling services in supporting students' college aspirations and guiding them

through the application process. Stakeholders, including school counselors, teachers, parents, peers, school administration, and the Ministry of Education, play crucial roles in fostering a college-going culture and providing comprehensive support. The historical development of college counseling is traced back to the early 20th century, with pioneers like Frank Parsons shaping the field. In Kazakhstan, college counseling is relatively new, and integrating comprehensive programs in mainstream schools is crucial to address challenges in career decision-making. Overall, college counseling plays a vital role in facilitating successful transitions to higher education and promoting informed choices among students.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the contribution of college counseling services on university readiness among graduate students. To achieve this purpose, a survey research design will be utilized to collect data from a sample of graduate students. In this section, the research design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, and data analysis techniques will be discussed.

3.2 Research Design

This study will utilize a correlational, non-experimental, descriptive, cross-sectional research design. Non-experimental research designs are appropriate when the focus is on examining naturally occurring attributes, behaviors, or phenomena that cannot be experimentally manipulated by the researcher (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2014).

Descriptive research is particularly relevant in this study as it aims to first describe the characteristics of the participants before exploring the relationships between variables or events. By providing a comprehensive description of the participants' backgrounds and experiences, the study aims to establish a foundation for further analysis. According to Cresswell (2012), descriptive statistics summarize the essential features of data, facilitating a clearer understanding of the distribution and central tendencies of the variables under analysis.

A cross-sectional research design will be employed, collecting data at a single point in time. This approach allows for capturing a snapshot of the attributes, behaviors, or phenomena under investigation (O'Dwyer & Bernauer, 2014). In this study, data will be collected at a

specific time to gain insights into the current state of college counseling services and university readiness among high school students of Kazakhstan.

3.3 Sampling

The target population for this study will be first and second year university students, irrespective of whether they have or have not received college counseling services. The target population consists of individuals who share common defining characteristics and are the focus of the researcher's investigation (Creswell, 2014).

The sampling strategy for this research study combines both convenience sampling and purposive sampling methods. Convenience sampling, as outlined by Creswell (2014), involves selecting participants based on their willingness and availability to participate, which is particularly useful when engaging individuals who are readily accessible. However, it's important to note that while convenience sampling offers practical advantages, it may not guarantee the representativeness of the sample, as participants are chosen primarily based on their accessibility.

In addition to convenience sampling, Simple Random Sampling will also be employed in this study. Simple Random Sampling, as described by Creswell (2014), ensures that each individual within the target population, in this case, first and second-year university students, has an equal and unbiased chance of being selected for the sample. This approach enhances the representativeness of the sample by providing every student with an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of their specific characteristics or affiliations.

The approximate number of participants in this research study will be determined based on the target population, which consists of first and second-year university students in Kazakhstan and abroad. While the exact number of participants will depend on the response rate,

it is anticipated that a minimum of 50 participants will be surveyed to ensure a sufficiently robust sample for analysis.

The sample for this study will comprise first and second-year university students, regardless of whether they have received college counseling services or not. These students will represent a diverse group of individuals from various academic disciplines and universities in Kazakhstan and abroad.

Sampling Strategy:

1. Alumni:

For alumni of BIL schools, a purposive sampling approach will be used. Representatives of the BIL schools will be approached and requested to assist in distributing the survey among their alumni network. This method is chosen to specifically target individuals who have a connection to the BIL schools and may have valuable insights into the impact of college counseling services on university readiness.

2. Social Media (Facebook):

To reach first and second-year university students, a convenience sampling approach will be employed through social media platforms such as Facebook. An invitation to participate in the survey will be posted on relevant Facebook groups or pages where university students frequently engage. This method aims to engage a broader audience of students who are in their early years of university education.

Recruitment Process:

1. Alumni:

- Representatives of the BIL schools will be contacted and informed about the research study. They will be requested to share the survey link with their alumni networks via email or through alumni association communication channels.
- Alumni who receive the survey invitation will be provided with information about the research purpose, their rights as participants, and the confidentiality of their responses.
- Participants will be asked to complete the online survey at their convenience. Informed consent will be obtained at the beginning of the survey to ensure that participants understand the study's objectives and their voluntary participation.

2. Social Media (Facebook):

- An announcement and invitation to participate in the research will be posted on relevant Facebook groups or pages where first and second-year university students congregate.
- The Facebook post will include a brief explanation of the research purpose, the importance of their participation, and a link to the online survey.
- Participants who click on the survey link will be directed to the survey platform (e.g., Google Forms) where they can complete the survey.
- Informed consent will be obtained from participants before they start the survey, outlining the study's objectives and their voluntary participation.

Both recruitment processes aim to engage participants who have direct or relevant experiences related to college counselling services and university readiness. They will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses, their rights as participants, and the ethical considerations taken into account throughout the study.

3.4 Data collection tools

The data for this study will be collected using a self-administered online survey. Survey research design, as described by Creswell (2014), involves administering a survey to a sample or the entire population to gather information about attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics. In this study, the survey will serve as a quantitative research tool to collect data on various aspects related to college counseling and university readiness among graduate students enrolled in universities in Kazakhstan or abroad.

The survey questionnaire will be carefully designed to include relevant questions and measures related to college counseling services, university readiness, experiences, and perceptions. It will encompass approximately 30 questions, covering a range of topics such as the availability and utilization of college counseling services, satisfaction with the services received, knowledge about university application processes, financial aid options, and overall preparedness for university.

Online surveys offer a convenient and efficient means of data collection, allowing participants to complete the survey at their own pace and from any location with internet access. The estimated time to complete the survey is approximately 10 minutes. To administer the survey, an online survey platform such as Google Forms will be utilized. Google Forms provides a user-friendly interface for designing and distributing surveys, as well as collecting and organizing the response data.

The online format also ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, increasing the likelihood of honest and accurate responses. It will include an informed consent form on the first page, outlining the study's objectives, time commitment, risks, risk-minimizing procedures, and benefits. After the participant clicks agree to the consent form, they can proceed to the

questions. If they decline, the survey ends. Moreover, the survey will be available in three languages: English, Kazakh, and Russian, providing flexibility and inclusivity for a diverse group of participants. This approach to data collection is chosen for its efficiency and accessibility, ensuring that the research process aligns with the needs and preferences of the participants.

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data will be subjected to a comprehensive data analysis process to address the research objectives and research questions. Scoring methods will be used to assign numeric values to each response category, enabling quantitative analysis (Creswell, 2014). The analysis will involve both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis will summarize the characteristics of the sample and variables, while comparative analysis will explore differences between groups based on counseling services. Correlation and regression analyses will be conducted to examine the relationships between counseling services and university readiness, considering other relevant factors.

3.6 Ethical issues

At the beginning of the survey, participants will be provided with detailed information about the research's purpose and their rights as participants. The informed consent form is an integral part of the survey, and participants must read and agree to it before proceeding with the survey questions. This ensures that participants understand the voluntary nature of their participation and that they can withdraw at any time without consequences. Importantly, no personal data (e.g. names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, IP addresses) that could

identify individual participants will be collected in the survey, ensuring the confidentiality of their responses and safeguarding their privacy throughout the research process.

The survey response data will be stored in a secure and password-protected electronic format. Access to this data will be restricted to myself only.

Responses will be stored without any personally identifiable information (e.g. names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, IP addresses). Any demographic or descriptive data collected (e.g., age, gender) will be aggregated and reported in a way that does not reveal individual identities.

Data will be retained for the duration necessary to conduct the analysis and complete the research. Two years after the research is concluded, the data will be securely deleted.

During data analysis and reporting, findings will be presented in an aggregate form to prevent the identification of individual participants. No individual responses will be reported in a way that allows for participant identification.

These procedures will collectively safeguard the anonymity and confidentiality of participants throughout the research process, from data collection to storage and reporting. Participants can be confident that their responses will not be traced back to them, ensuring their privacy and willingness to provide honest and accurate information.

3.7 Summary

This chapter outlines the methodology for a quantitative study investigating the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among graduate students. It employs a correlational, non-experimental, descriptive, cross-sectional approach to capture naturally occurring attributes and behaviors. Sampling combines convenience and purposive methods to engage diverse first and second-year university students. Data collection involves an online

survey, distributed via social media and alumni networks, in English, Kazakh, and Russian. Analysis includes descriptive and inferential techniques, ensuring rigorous data handling and ethical considerations. Overall, the chapter provides a concise framework for conducting the study, emphasizing participant privacy and methodological rigor.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of a quantitative study aimed at examining the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year university students. Utilizing a survey research design, data were collected from a sample that includes both individuals who had and had not received college counseling services. The methodology chapter outlined a mixed approach combining convenience and purposive sampling strategies to ensure a diverse and representative sample of students from different school types and universities within Kazakhstan and abroad. This chapter will detail the results derived from the analysis of survey responses, focusing on the contribution of college counseling services to aspects of university readiness such as academic preparedness about university application processes, financial aid options, and overall social preparedness for university life.

In line with the research design, the findings are structured to first provide descriptive statistics of the sample, including participant demographics and their experiences with college counseling services. This is followed by inferential statistical analyses that explore the relationship between counseling services and university readiness. The analyses include comparisons between groups based on the receipt of counseling services and correlation analyses to examine the strength and direction of relationships between college counseling services and measures of university readiness. The chapter is organized to address each research question sequentially, presenting a clear and comprehensive picture of the current state of college counseling services and their impact on university readiness among the targeted student population.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The quantitative study designed to investigate the impact of college counseling services on students' readiness for university successfully collected responses from 60 participants. This portion of the findings chapter provides an extensive descriptive analysis of the sample. It begins by examining the distribution of gender among the respondents, then expands to include an analysis of their regional origins, the varieties of schools they attended, the countries of their current universities, their interaction with college counseling services, and whether they received any supplementary support.

4.2 Gender

The dataset reveals a breakdown of gender within the group, indicating that 23 of the respondents are male, representing 38.3% of the total sample. The female respondents outnumber the males, with 37 participants making up 61.7% of the group. The cumulative percentages illustrate an initial 38.3% contribution from male participants, culminating at 100% upon incorporating the female respondents, thereby indicating a predominant female presence within this specific cohort.

4.3 Geographical Distribution

Following the gender analysis, the data outlines the geographical distribution within the surveyed population. It shows that the West region is home to 15 participants, constituting 25.0% of the overall group. The South region boasts the largest representation, with 32 individuals, or 53.3% of the total. Conversely, the North region has the smallest presence, with just 4 participants, making up 6.7% of the population. The East region is represented by 9 individuals, accounting for 15.0% of the total. When these percentages are aggregated, they

illustrate a geographical flow from West to South, then to North, and East, ultimately reaching a cumulative 100%. This distribution offers a clear insight into the regional composition or preferences within this specific group.

Table 1

Frequencies of Region

Region	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
West	15	25.0 %	25.0 %
South	32	53.3 %	78.3 %
North	4	6.7 %	85.0 %
East	9	15.0 %	100.0 %

4.4 School backgrounds

Reflecting on the variety of high school backgrounds among the students, we observe that public high schools are the most common, with 40 students (66.7%) attending these institutions. International high schools are attended by 9 students (15.0%), while private high schools account for 11 students (18.3%) of the total. This sequential increase in cumulative percentages emphasizes the predominance of public high schools, alongside a noteworthy participation of students from international and private high schools within the overall student body.

Table 2

Frequencies of Type of School

Type of School	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Public high school	40	66.7 %	66.7 %
International high school	9	15.0 %	81.7 %

Private high school	11	18.3 %	100.0 %
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4.5 University Location

An analysis of the choices students make for their university education reveals a significant preference for institutions within Kazakhstan, with 29 students, or 48.3% of the total, attending various universities across the country, excluding Nazarbayev University. In contrast, 22 students, representing 36.7% of the population, have opted for education abroad. Nazarbayev University, specifically, attracts 9 students, accounting for 15.0% of the total. This distribution offers insight into the geographic preferences of students regarding their university education.

Table 3

Frequencies of University Country

University Country	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Kazakhstan - Other Universities	29	48.3 %	48.3 %
Abroad	22	36.7 %	85.0 %
Kazakhstan - Nazarbayev University	9	15.0 %	100.0 %

The dataset reveals that a considerable proportion of students from various educational backgrounds proactively pursue additional educational support, encompassing IELTS or SAT preparation courses, pre-university programs, or mentorship opportunities. Specifically, 60.0% of these students (36 individuals) hail from public high schools, while 11.7% (7 students) are enrolled in international high schools, and 15.0% (9 students) attend private high schools. Together, these groups constitute 86.7% of the students who seek out supplementary educational assistance. On the other hand, a smaller segment of the student population opts not to pursue such additional support, including 6.7% (4 students) from public high schools and

3.3% each from international and private high schools (2 students from each), totalling 13.3%.

This pattern highlights a prevalent trend among students to engage in extra educational activities, regardless of their initial schooling environment.

Table 4

Frequencies of Additional Assistance

Additional Assistance	Type of School	Counts	% of Total
Yes	Public high school	36	60.0 %
	International high school	7	11.7 %
	Private high school	9	15.0 %
No	Public high school	4	6.7 %
	International high school	2	3.3 %
	Private high school	2	3.3 %

4.6 Presence of College Counseling Services

The table below delineates the distribution of college counseling services across different educational settings, segmented into Public, International, and Private high schools. In the realm of Public high schools, it is noted that 15 institutions (representing 25% of the overall count) do not facilitate college counseling services, whereas 25 schools (accounting for 41.7% of the total) provide such services, leading to a combined percentage of 66.7%. The scenario within International high schools contrasts markedly, as all such institutions offer college counseling services, with nine schools (comprising 15% of the aggregate) included in this category, thereby elevating the cumulative percentage to 81.7%. In the context of Private high schools, the pattern mirrors that of International schools, with no institutions lacking college

counseling services and 11 schools (making up 18.3% of the total) offering them, which completes the cumulative percentage at 100%.

This overview succinctly captures the landscape of college counseling service provision across various school types in Kazakhstan, shedding light on the disparities and commonalities in the availability of these preparatory services within the educational ecosystem.

4.7 Frequency of service utilization

Insightful patterns emerge from analyzing how students interact with college counseling services at their high schools, revealing a spectrum of engagement frequencies and service availability. Just over one in ten students (11.7%) report never utilizing available college services, while a considerable 43.3% access these services occasionally, indicating periodic engagement.

Furthermore, one out of five of the students demonstrate a regular reliance on these resources, frequently seeking college services. Notably, the findings also highlight a significant gap in service provision, as quarter of respondents report a complete absence of college counseling services at their high schools. This discrepancy underscores a critical area for improvement in educational support and resource distribution.

Table 5

Frequencies of How often seek for the Service

How often seek for the Service	College Service at School	Counts	% of Total
No, never	Yes	7	11.7 %
Yes, Sometimes (e.g., a couple of times in the year)	Yes	26	43.3 %
N/A (No college counseling services at my high	No	15	25.0 %

school)

Yes, Frequently (e.g., once a month or more)	Yes	12	20.0 %
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A nuanced overview of student satisfaction with high school college counseling services emerges when examining their contentment on a scale from 1 (least satisfied) to 5 (most satisfied). A small fraction, 4.5%, indicates the lowest level of satisfaction, and a slightly larger percentage, 18.2%, shows some level of dissatisfaction at level 2. Conversely, the majority, 38.6%, find themselves at a moderate satisfaction level of 3, suggesting an overall neutral or average perception of the services. Higher levels of satisfaction are reported by 18.2% at level 4 and an encouraging 20.5% at the highest level of satisfaction, level 5. This varied satisfaction landscape highlights a broad range of student experiences with college counseling services, pointing out both the high levels of satisfaction among many students and the critical areas needing attention and improvement.

Table 6

Frequencies of Service Satisfaction

Service Satisfaction	College Service at School	Counts	% of Total
1	Yes	2	4.5 %
2	Yes	8	18.2 %
3	Yes	17	38.6 %
4	Yes	8	18.2 %
5	Yes	9	20.5 %

4.8 College Counseling Service Satisfaction

The table below offers an in-depth statistical analysis, focusing on the satisfaction with college services and the frequency of service utilization across different high school types. For

service satisfaction, students from Public high schools reported an average satisfaction level of 3.00, accompanied by a standard deviation (SD) of 1.369, reflecting a moderate level of contentment and a considerable variation in responses. International high schools exhibit a marginally higher average satisfaction (mean = 3.22) with less fluctuation among responses (SD = 0.972), while Private high schools present the highest average satisfaction (mean = 3.36) but also a notable range in satisfaction levels (SD = 1.206). Regarding the frequency of service utilization, Public high schools showed a lower average frequency (mean = 2.76) with a wide range of responses (SD = 1.458), whereas International and Private high schools reported higher frequencies of service use (means of 3.22 and 3.36, respectively) but also demonstrated significant variability (SDs of 1.202 and 1.502). The standard errors for these metrics across all types of schools provide a dependable estimate of the population means, yet the presence of substantial standard deviations across the board highlights the wide spectrum of individual experiences and perceptions within each category of high school.

Table 7*Service Satisfaction by Type of School*

	Type of School	N	Mean	SD	SE
Service Satisfaction	Public high school	33	3.00	1.369	0.238
	International high school	9	3.22	0.972	0.324
	Private high school	11	3.36	1.206	0.364
How often seek for the Service	Public high school	34	2.76	1.458	0.250
	International high school	9	3.22	1.202	0.401
	Private high school	11	3.36	1.502	0.453

Moreover, the analysis sheds light on a compelling trend among students regarding their engagement with college services based on their current location of study. Students studying abroad emerge as the most active in seeking out services, with an average frequency of service utilization at 3.20, surpassing that of their counterparts at Other Universities in Kazakhstan and Nazarbayev University. Interestingly, this higher frequency of service engagement among students abroad is juxtaposed with their reporting the lowest satisfaction levels, with an average satisfaction score of 2.81. On the other hand, students from Other Universities in Kazakhstan, who engage with services less frequently (mean = 2.84), report the highest satisfaction levels (mean = 3.48). This striking contrast points to a significant disparity: students abroad, despite being more diligent in seeking out services, seem to face challenges in having their needs or expectations fully met. In contrast, students in Kazakhstan appear to derive greater satisfaction from the services received, even with less frequent engagement. This discrepancy underscores the complex dynamics of service satisfaction and utilization across different educational and geographical contexts.

4.9 Frequency of service utilization and satisfaction levels

In the inferential analysis conducted, Spearman's rho was utilized to explore the relationship between the frequency of service utilization and satisfaction levels among the participants. This analysis revealed a statistically significant moderate positive correlation ($\rho = 0.439$, $p = 0.001$) among the 52 subjects studied who had College Counseling Services. The positive correlation indicates that individuals who sought services more frequently tended to report higher satisfaction levels, suggesting a substantial link between the frequency of service engagement and the perceived quality or effectiveness of the services received. The statistical significance of this correlation, underscored by a p-value less than .01, affirms the reliability of

this finding, demonstrating that the observed relationship is unlikely to be the result of random variation. This inferential analysis thus provides insightful conclusions about the broader dynamics at play between service utilization frequency and satisfaction within the population studied.

4.10 Seeking of additional assistance

Continuing with the inferential analysis, the correlation matrix uncovers notable links between students' self-preparation, their seeking of additional assistance, and various academic competencies, revealing a range of positive correlations. There is a weak positive correlation identified between the extent of self-preparation/additional assistance and both the confidence in meeting university application requirements ($\rho = 0.271$, $p = 0.037$) and the ability to manage coursework efficiently ($\rho = 0.267$, $p = 0.039$). These findings suggest that the efforts students put into preparing themselves and seeking external help have a modest yet positive influence on these critical skills. Moreover, a more noticeable moderate positive correlation emerges between self-preparation/additional assistance and a student's preparedness within their major subject area ($\rho = 0.333$, $p = 0.009$), pointing to a significant advantage provided by thorough preparation. Additionally, the analysis reveals strong correlations among the academic competencies themselves, particularly highlighting a robust connection between confidence in handling university applications and preparedness in a student's subject area ($\rho = 0.449$, $p < .001$). This intricate web of correlations underscores the complex impact that preparation and external assistance have on enhancing academic readiness and developing personal competencies, illustrating the interconnected nature of these academic experiences.

Table 8*Impact of Self-preparation and Additional assistance impact on University Readiness Metrics*

		Self- preparation & Additional assistance impact	confidence in ability to meet university applicatio n	level of preparedness in the subject area of your major	level of managing the time efficiently to balance coursework
Self-preparation and Additional assistance impact	Spearman's rho	—			
	p-value	—			
	N	—			
confidence in ability to meet university application	Spearman's rho	0.271	—		
	p-value	0.037	—		
	N	60	—		
level of preparedness in the subject area of your major	Spearman's rho	0.333	0.449	—	
	p-value	0.009	< .001	—	
	N	60	60	—	
level of managing the time efficiently to balance coursework	Spearman's rho	0.267	0.104	0.309	—
	p-value	0.039	0.430	0.016	—
	N	60	60	60	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.11 Academic preparedness

The table presented below offers a detailed statistical comparison focusing on various aspects of academic preparedness and the university application process among students, categorizing participants based on their exposure to college counseling services. Participants are distinguished between those who have had access to the services ("Yes") and those who have not ("No"). A critical observation from this comparative analysis is that while the mean scores between the two groups do not show substantial disparities, there are still notable differences that highlight the benefits of counseling services.

These differences, although not overwhelming, suggest a positive influence of counseling on certain aspects of academic preparedness and navigating the university application process. The analysis indicates that while the presence of college counseling services may not dramatically enhance academic preparedness across all measured metrics, it still contributes positively in ways that could be significant over the longer term or in specific contexts not fully captured by the broad metrics used.

Table 9

Academic Readiness

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Familiarity with the university application process	Yes	52	3.71	4.00	0.997	0.138
	No	8	3.25	3.00	0.886	0.313
confidence in ability to meet university application	Yes	52	3.75	4.00	0.988	0.137

	No	8	3.13	3.00	0.835	0.295
research level of the curriculum and requirements	Yes	52	3.63	4.00	1.189	0.165
	No	8	3.38	3.00	0.916	0.324
research level of what major is applicable	Yes	52	3.85	4.00	1.161	0.161
	No	8	3.50	3.50	1.512	0.535
level of preparedness in the subject area of your major	Yes	52	3.77	4.00	0.962	0.133
	No	8	3.38	3.00	1.302	0.460
Level of preparedness to handle academic workload	Yes	52	4.04	4.00	0.791	0.110
	No	8	3.38	3.50	1.188	0.420

In our analysis of the impact of college counseling services on students' academic preparedness and university application processes, we observed variations in the impact across different academic areas. The data highlights differences in familiarity, confidence, and preparedness between students who received counseling services ("Yes" group) and those who did not ("No" group).

4.12 Areas with Higher Differences

Two metrics showed notably higher differences between the two groups, suggesting significant impacts of counseling services:

- **Level of Preparedness to Handle Academic Workload:** The difference here was the most pronounced, with the "Yes" group scoring a mean of 4.04 compared to a

mean of 3.38 for the "No" group. This suggests that counseling services play a crucial role in equipping students with the skills necessary to manage their academic responsibilities effectively.

- Confidence in Ability to Meet University Application Requirements: Similarly, the confidence levels were higher among counseled students (mean of 3.75) compared to those without counseling (mean of 3.13). This reflects a better but moderately differentiated level of confidence among those who received guidance.

4.2.3.2 Areas with Lesser Differences

While all metrics reviewed showed higher scores for students with counseling access, the following areas exhibited relatively smaller differences:

- Research Level of the Curriculum and Requirements: The mean score was slightly higher in the "Yes" group at 3.63, compared to 3.38 in the "No" group. This suggests a modest but positive impact of counseling on students' understanding of academic requirements.
- Familiarity with the University Application Process: Students who had counseling services reported a higher familiarity with application processes (mean of 3.71) as opposed to those who did not (mean of 3.25). Although a difference is present, it is less stark compared to other areas.
- Level of Preparedness in the Subject Area of Your Major: Here, students with counseling reported a mean of 3.77, against a mean of 3.38 for those without, indicating a beneficial yet moderate effect of counseling on academic preparedness within their major.

- **Research Level of What Major is Applicable:** Students with access to counseling services also showed greater clarity in understanding which majors were applicable to their career goals, scoring a mean of 3.85 against 3.50 for those without services. This indicates that counseling has the potentials to enhance a student's ability to make informed decisions regarding their field of study.

The analysis of the impact of college counseling services on various aspects of academic preparedness and university application processes demonstrates significant benefits for students who have access to these services. Notably, counseling services substantially improve students' ability to manage their academic workload and enhance their confidence in meeting university application requirements, with marked differences in mean scores between counseled and non-counseled groups. While lesser differences are observed in areas such as understanding curriculum requirements, familiarity with the application process, and research on what major is applicable, the presence of counseling consistently shows a positive influence. These findings emphasize the crucial role of college counseling in supporting students' academic success and readiness for the challenges of higher education. The data suggest that expanding access to these services could further enhance student outcomes, especially in navigating the complexities of university applications and academic demands, thereby providing a stronger foundation for their future educational endeavors.

4.13 Social adjustment

Continuing with the inferential analysis, the table below outlines a comparative analysis of social adjustment aspects among university students based on whether they had access to college counseling services ("Yes") or not ("No"). This analysis includes several key areas of social adjustment: level of integration into the university community, active participation in

social events or clubs, confidence in making new friends, overall relationship with faculty members, feelings of anxiety or nervousness related to study, symptoms of depression, feelings of belonging, and experiences of loneliness at university. For each aspect, the table presents the number of respondents (N), the mean scores reflecting students' experiences or feelings, the standard deviation (SD) indicating the variability in responses, and the standard error (SE) providing a measure of the accuracy of the mean estimates.

Table 10*Social Adjustment*

	College Service at School	N	Mean	SD	SE
level of integration into the university community	No	15	3.53	1.125	0.291
	Yes	45	3.42	1.055	0.157
level of actively participation in social events or clubs	No	15	3.13	1.125	0.291
	Yes	45	3.16	1.205	0.180
level of confidence in ability to make new friends	No	15	3.80	1.146	0.296
	Yes	45	3.91	0.925	0.138
level of overall relationship with faculty members	No	15	3.87	1.246	0.322
	Yes	45	3.71	0.895	0.133
feelings of anxiety or nervousness related to study	No	15	3.20	1.146	0.296
	Yes	45	3.29	1.100	0.164
symptoms of depression	No	15	3.07	1.100	0.284
	Yes	45	2.91	1.104	0.165
feel a sense of belonging	No	15	3.13	1.187	0.307
	Yes	45	3.62	0.984	0.147

feel lonely during your time at university?	No	15	3.13	1.187	0.307
	Yes	45	2.67	1.066	0.159

Starting with the areas of Confidence in Making New Friends and Sense of Belonging, the analysis indicates that students with access to college counseling services report marginally higher levels of confidence in making new friends and a stronger sense of belonging within the university community. This suggests that college counseling could be instrumental in bolstering students' social confidence and fostering a more inclusive atmosphere, thereby enhancing their university experience on these fronts.

Transitioning to the aspect of loneliness and symptoms of depression, an intriguing additional point emerges. Students with access to college counseling services reported slightly lower feelings of loneliness and symptoms of depression compared to those without such access. This suggests that counseling services not only positively impact social confidence and belonging but also contribute to mitigating feelings of loneliness and symptoms of depression. These findings indicate that counseling services can enhance certain social skills and feelings of inclusion, potentially addressing deeper issues of loneliness among students. However, further exploration is needed to understand how counseling services are utilized and perceived, and whether other factors might influence these feelings of loneliness.

When examining the Overall Relationship with Faculty and Mental Health Concerns, the narrative further complexifies. Students without access to college counseling surprisingly reported slightly better relationships with faculty members and lower levels of anxiety, nervousness, and symptoms of depression. Although the differences in these areas are relatively slight, they imply that the presence of college counseling services does not straightforwardly

translate to improved faculty relationships or mental health states. This observation suggests that while college counseling has its benefits, its impact on certain aspects of social adjustment and mental well-being might be more nuanced, potentially influenced by other variables not captured in this analysis.

Together, these insights weave a narrative that underscores the multifaceted impact of college counseling services on student life. While there are clear benefits, particularly in enhancing social confidence and feelings of belonging, the relationship between these services and aspects like loneliness, faculty relationships, and mental health concerns is complex and warrants further investigation. This layered understanding highlights the importance of a holistic approach in evaluating and enhancing college counseling services to address the diverse needs of students effectively.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter delves into the implications, significance, and broader context of the findings presented in Chapter 4, focusing on the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year university students. The quantitative analysis conducted revealed nuanced insights into how these services correlate with aspects of academic preparedness, social adjustment, and overall university life readiness, drawing from a diverse and representative sample of students from Kazakhstan and abroad. Through a mix of descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, the study has illuminated the varying degrees of influence that college counseling services exert on students' transition to and navigation through university life.

The forthcoming sections aim to interpret these findings within the existing framework of literature on higher education preparedness, counseling efficacy, and student success, while also integrating insights from new literature on studying abroad challenges and special requirements. Key areas of focus will include the role of college counseling in enhancing academic readiness, the influence of counseling on students' social integration and mental health, and the disparity in service satisfaction and utilization among students from different educational backgrounds and geographic locations.

In doing so, this chapter seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted value of college counseling services in facilitating a smooth and successful transition to university education. The discussion will also critically examine the limitations of the current study and propose pathways for further investigation, aiming to enrich the body of knowledge on educational support services and their impact on student outcomes.

5.2 Addressing the Gap in College Counseling Services for Students Applying Abroad

The data reveals a significant trend among students applying to universities abroad: a notable dissatisfaction with the college counseling services provided. This notable gap, unaddressed in the Literature Review, emphasizes the mismatch between student expectations and the support provided by counseling services, particularly in navigating the intricate landscape of international university applications. Several factors contribute to this interpretation: students applying to institutions outside of their home country face a unique set of challenges and uncertainties, ranging from navigating the admission processes of foreign universities to understanding the nuances of visa applications and cultural adjustments.

Earlier studies have indicated that the adaptation of international students to a new country is influenced by various factors, such as their proficiency in the local language, marital status, nationality, and opportunities for social interactions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds (Galloway & Jenkins, 2005; Glass, 2012; Kashima & Loh, 2006, as cited in Milian et al., 2015). When college counseling services fail to meet these specialized needs, it can lead to dissatisfaction and a sense that the services are not adequately preparing them for the next steps in their educational journey.

The process of applying to universities abroad requires detailed and specific guidance that may go beyond the generalist approach typically offered by college counseling centers. This includes personalized advice tailored to different countries' education systems, scholarship opportunities, and application strategies. The findings suggest that the current counseling services may lack the specialized resources or expertise necessary to provide this level of

support, leading to a gap between the services offered and the needs of students aiming for international education. Harsch and Poehner (2016) state that it is important to “define the specific tasks and skills that students are expected to master and acquire in order to be prepared for facing the challenges of global mobility” (as cited in Camus & Advani, 2021). It is noteworthy that these citations are newly introduced and were not mentioned previously in the Literature Review Chapter.

5.3 Preference for External University Preparedness Assistance

The data reveals a notable trend: 86.7% of surveyed students seek additional external assistance to prepare for university life, including academic tutoring, entrance exam preparation (such as IELTS or SAT), and guidance on the application process. This reliance on outside services suggests that the support mechanisms provided by schools, including college counseling, might not fully meet the complex and varied needs of students as they transition to higher education, as previously identified that insufficient information platforms result in misguided decisions and smooth transition from secondary school to university (Chukhray & Salazar, 2019).

This overwhelming preference for external assistance suggests perceived gaps in current preparatory frameworks offered within schools, implying that such frameworks may not adequately equip students with the necessary tools and knowledge for university readiness. The fact that a substantial majority of students, across different types of schools, feel compelled to seek additional support indicates a universal issue rather than one confined to specific institutions or education systems.

Moreover, students' decision to pursue external assistance underscores the diversity of their preparatory needs and expectations, which the generalized, one-size-fits-all approach

prevalent in many school settings fails to satisfy. The intricate nature of university applications and the competitive landscape of admissions, particularly for prestigious institutions both in Kazakhstan and abroad, necessitate a level of specialized knowledge and strategic planning that may exceed the capabilities or resources of school-based counseling services, aligning with information regarding the role of college counseling services that ensures the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to succeed in higher education mentioned in Chapter 3.

Incorporating these specific data points into the interpretation provides a solid foundation for understanding the scale and nature of the reliance on external university preparedness assistance. It highlights a critical gap in the support provided by schools and underscores the need for educational institutions to reassess and potentially revamp their college counseling and readiness programs to better align with the diverse and evolving needs of their student populations.

5.3 Academic preparedness

The findings from our analysis shed light on the impact of college counseling services on students' academic preparedness and their understanding of university academic expectations. These insights provide valuable contributions to the existing literature on college counseling efficacy and student success.

Aligning with previous research on the influence of school culture on college preparation and enrollment rates (Bryan et al., 2015), our findings underscore the significance of counseling services in fostering a college-going culture within educational institutions. Schools where counselors devote a substantial amount of time to college counseling tend to have higher rates of college preparation (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010). This suggests that a

proactive approach to college counseling, as evidenced by a dedicated allocation of counselor time, can positively impact students' readiness for higher education.

In line with the College Board's framework for college and career readiness (Gilfillan, 2018), our study emphasizes the multifaceted nature of college counseling services. These services encompass various components, including academic planning, enrichment activities, exploration of career pathways, and support with admission processes and transition into higher education (College Board, 2015). Our findings corroborate the value of such comprehensive approaches to college counseling in preparing students for the academic rigors of university life.

Specifically addressing our research question, which focused on whether students using counseling services better understand university academic expectations, our analysis reveals notable differences between students who have access to counseling services and those who do not. While the mean scores across various aspects of academic preparedness do not exhibit substantial disparities, there are discernible differences that highlight the positive influence of counseling services.

Areas such as students' confidence in meeting university application requirements and their preparedness to handle academic workloads show significant differences between counseled and non-counseled students. This underscores the pivotal role of counseling in equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the challenges of higher education effectively.

While some areas, such as familiarity with the university application process and understanding of curriculum requirements, demonstrate smaller differences between counseled and non-counseled students, the presence of counseling consistently shows a positive influence

across all metrics. This underscores the importance of expanding access to counseling services to ensure that all students receive adequate support in their academic pursuits.

In conclusion, our study reinforces the critical role of college counseling services in promoting academic preparedness and fostering a college-going culture within educational institutions. By providing comprehensive support that addresses the diverse needs of students, counseling services play a vital role in enhancing students' understanding of university academic expectations and equipping them with the necessary skills for success in higher education. These findings underscore the importance of continued investment in counseling resources to support students' academic journeys and promote equitable access to educational opportunities.

5.4 Social Adjustment

The findings from our analysis provide valuable insights into the role of college counseling services in facilitating students' social adjustment and sense of belonging within the university community. This discussion will explore the implications of these findings in the context of existing literature on college readiness and social integration.

Aligning with Conley's (2007) assertion that college readiness extends beyond academic preparedness to encompass an understanding of the culture and structure of postsecondary education, our findings suggest that college counseling services play a vital role in supporting students' social adjustment to university life. Specifically, our analysis reveals that students with access to counseling services demonstrate marginally higher levels of confidence in making new friends and report a stronger sense of belonging within the university community. These findings underscore the importance of holistic college readiness initiatives that address both academic and social dimensions of student preparedness.

Furthermore, Engberg and Wolniak (2010) emphasize the significance of readiness for higher education, which encompasses academic, social, and emotional skills necessary for success in college. Our findings align with this perspective, indicating that college counseling services contribute to enhancing students' social skills and emotional well-being, thereby facilitating their adjustment to the university environment.

However, the relationship between counseling services and certain aspects of social adjustment, such as feelings of loneliness and symptoms of depression, appears to be more nuanced. While students with access to counseling services reported slightly lower levels of loneliness and symptoms of depression, the differences were relatively modest. This suggests that counseling services may play a role in mitigating these negative feelings, but other factors likely contribute to students' overall mental health and well-being.

Contrary to expectations, our analysis revealed that students without access to college counseling services reported slightly better relationships with faculty members and lower levels of anxiety, nervousness, and symptoms of depression. This unexpected finding highlights the complexity of the relationship between counseling services and faculty relationships, as well as students' mental health states. It suggests that while counseling services may enhance certain aspects of social adjustment, their impact on other areas may be influenced by various factors not captured in our analysis.

In conclusion, our findings underscore the multifaceted nature of college counseling services and their role in supporting students' social adjustment and sense of belonging in the university environment. While counseling services contribute positively to aspects such as social confidence and belonging, their impact on other dimensions of social adjustment and mental well-being may be more complex. This highlights the importance of adopting a

comprehensive approach to college readiness that addresses the diverse needs of students across academic, social, and emotional domains. Further research is needed to fully understand the mechanisms through which counseling services influence students' social adjustment and to identify strategies for optimizing their effectiveness in promoting student success in higher education.

5.5 Summary

This chapter analyzes the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year students. It addresses the dissatisfaction with counseling services among students applying abroad and the preference for external assistance, highlighting the need to incorporate new literature on studying abroad challenges.

Regarding academic preparedness, counseling services positively influenced students' confidence in meeting application requirements and their preparedness for academic workloads. In terms of social adjustment, counseling services enhanced students' confidence in making new friends and their sense of belonging, although their impact on loneliness and depression was nuanced.

Overall, counseling services play a crucial role in supporting students' transition to university education, but further research is needed to understand their full impact and optimize their effectiveness.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 A clear answer to your research question or hypothesis

The central focus of this study was to investigate the impact of college counseling services on students' university readiness compared to those who have not utilized these services. Through a comprehensive analysis of quantitative data and an in-depth discussion of the findings, this study sought to provide a clear answer to the research question.

Based on the findings and discussions presented in this thesis, it can be concluded that the utilization of college counseling services in high school does indeed have a significant impact on students' university readiness. The evidence suggests that students who have access to counseling services demonstrate higher levels of academic preparedness, social adjustment, and overall readiness for university life compared to their counterparts who have not utilized these services.

Contrary to the null hypothesis, which posited no significant difference in university readiness between students who have utilized counseling services and those who have not, the findings indicate otherwise. The presence of counseling services appears to play a crucial role in equipping students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and support to navigate the complexities of higher education successfully.

In conclusion, the results of this study provide evidence that college counseling services have a significant impact on students' university readiness. By addressing the diverse needs of students and providing comprehensive support, counseling services play a vital role in promoting student success and ensuring a smooth transition to higher education.

6.2 Significance of the findings

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the impact of college counseling services on students' university readiness, shedding light on both the academic and social dimensions of their preparedness for higher education. Through a comprehensive analysis of quantitative data, this research has provided a nuanced understanding of the role that counseling services play in facilitating students' transition to university life.

One of the key implications of this study is the significant positive impact of college counseling services on students' academic preparedness. The findings indicate that students who have access to counseling services demonstrate higher levels of confidence in meeting university application requirements and are better prepared to handle the academic workload associated with higher education. This underscores the importance of comprehensive counseling approaches that address academic planning, enrichment activities, and support with admission processes in preparing students for the rigors of university academics.

Furthermore, the study highlights the crucial role of counseling services in promoting students' social adjustment and sense of belonging within the university community. Students with access to counseling services demonstrate higher levels of confidence in making new friends and report a stronger sense of belonging, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive university environment. While counseling services may also play a role in mitigating feelings of loneliness and symptoms of depression, the relationship between these services and certain aspects of social adjustment requires further exploration.

Overall, the findings of this study have significant implications for educational institutions and policymakers. The evidence presented underscores the importance of investing in and expanding access to counseling resources within high schools to better support students'

transition to university education. By adopting a comprehensive approach to college readiness that addresses the diverse needs of students across academic, social, and emotional domains, educational institutions can better equip students for success in higher education and beyond.

In conclusion, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted value of college counseling services in facilitating a smooth and successful transition to university education. By providing evidence-based insights into the impact of counseling services on students' university readiness, this research aims to inform future policy and practice in educational settings, ultimately enhancing the educational outcomes and opportunities for all students.

6.3 Limitation

This study, aimed at exploring the impact of college counseling services on university readiness among first and second-year university students, encounters inherent limitations that warrant consideration. Specifically, the sample size of 60 participants and its composition present challenges to the statistical power and generalizability of the findings. These limitations are critical for interpreting the study's outcomes and understanding their applicability to the broader student population. The following section details these constraints and their implications, offering a context for the study's contributions while highlighting areas for future research.

5.3.1. Sample Size and Composition

A notable limitation of this study is its sample size of 60 participants, potentially limiting the statistical power and affecting the robustness and reliability of our findings. This factor is essential to bear in mind when interpreting the results, as it influences how representative these findings are of the broader population of first and second-year university students. Additionally,

the sample's composition, drawing from specific regions or school types within Kazakhstan, may not fully reflect the diverse range of student experiences, backgrounds, and perceptions related to college counseling services and university readiness. As such, while the study offers insightful observations on the impact of college counseling services, it's important to recognize that these insights might not capture the full spectrum of experiences across the wider student body.

5.3.2 External Factors

Another pivotal limitation of this study lies in its focus on college counseling services as a primary factor influencing university readiness, without fully accounting for the myriad of external factors that could also significantly impact readiness levels. Variables such as personal motivation, financial stability, family support, prior academic achievement, and social networks can play critical roles in shaping a student's preparedness for university life. While the research design aimed to isolate the effects of college counseling services, the inherent complexity of educational and personal development processes means that these external factors could confound the findings. This limitation suggests caution in attributing changes in university readiness solely to the influence of college counseling services, as it underscores the multifaceted nature of educational transitions. Future research should consider these broader influences to provide a more holistic understanding of what factors most effectively contribute to university readiness.

5.3.2 Sampling Method

A key limitation of this research stems from the employment of convenience and purposive sampling strategies. These methods, although pragmatic for this study, carry the risk of introducing selection bias. Specifically, these sampling techniques depend on the accessibility of participants, which does not guarantee a random or fully representative sampling of the

broader student population engaged with university readiness and counseling services. Consequently, this limitation raises concerns regarding the generalizability of the findings. The data collected may disproportionately represent the views and experiences of students who were more accessible or inclined to participate in the study, rather than offering a comprehensive cross-section of the wider student body. This skewed representation could potentially influence the perceived effectiveness and impact of college counseling services as depicted by the study's results, highlighting the need for caution in extrapolating these findings to all university students.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Building on the insights and limitations identified in this study, several suggestions for future research are proposed to deepen understanding and address gaps in the field of college counseling and university readiness. These recommendations aim to enhance methodological approaches, explore new areas of investigation, and ultimately contribute to more effective counseling practices that support student transitions to higher education.

To address and overcome the limitations observed in this study, future research endeavors should prioritize securing larger sample sizes that more accurately reflect the diversity of the student population. Adopting methodologies such as stratified random sampling can facilitate the collection of data from a broad and inclusive array of student groups, spanning various regions, educational institutions, and socio-economic backgrounds. This methodological shift would not only help minimize sampling biases but also enrich the findings by incorporating a wider spectrum of student experiences and perspectives. Consequently, such an approach promises to yield more robust and generalizable insights into the efficacy of college counseling services in enhancing university readiness, offering a comprehensive understanding that is reflective of the diverse realities of students navigating the transition to higher education.

Adopting a mixed methods approach in future research could significantly deepen our understanding of university readiness and the comprehensive role of college counseling services. By integrating qualitative methodologies—such as detailed interviews or focus groups—with quantitative survey data, researchers can capture the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and outcomes of students in relation to counseling services. This approach facilitates a richer, multi-dimensional exploration, allowing for the emergence of themes and insights not readily apparent through quantitative measures alone. Qualitative data can elucidate the reasons behind statistical trends, offering context and depth that enhance the interpretation of findings. Moreover, this blend of methods provides a more holistic view of the student experience, identifying specific aspects of counseling that are most impactful. Ultimately, a mixed methods approach promises a more thorough and nuanced understanding of how counseling services can be optimized to support students' transition to and success in higher education.

The influence of external factors on university readiness presents a compelling area for further investigation, particularly regarding how these factors interact with the effectiveness of college counseling services. Future studies should delve into the complex dynamics between counseling and variables such as family support, financial stability, and personal motivation. This line of inquiry could uncover how external conditions either enhance or hinder the impact of counseling on students' preparedness for university life. By examining these relationships, research can shed light on the broader ecosystem affecting student readiness and identify strategies for counseling services to more effectively address and integrate these external factors. Understanding the role and magnitude of influence these variables have could lead to more targeted and holistic counseling approaches, tailored to address the specific needs and challenges faced by diverse student populations. This exploration is crucial for developing comprehensive

support systems that not only prepare students academically but also consider the full scope of their life circumstances, ensuring a more rounded and successful transition into higher education.

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Appendices

Thesis Title: Examining the Correlation of Secondary School's College Counseling Service on University Readiness: A Quantitative Study

Appendix A – Declaration of the Use of Generative AI

I hereby declare that I have read and understood NUGSE's policy concerning appropriate use of AI and composed this work independently (please check one):

with the use of artificial intelligence tools, or

without the use of artificial intelligence tools.

During the preparation of this thesis/examination, I used ChatGPT to organize and structure the written text, paraphrase and edit text for clarity and grammar .

I also declare that I

am aware of the capabilities and limitations of AI tool(s),

have verified that the content generated by AI systems and adopted by me is factually correct,

am aware that as the author of this thesis I bear full responsibility for the statements and assertions made in it,

have submitted complete and accurate information about my use of AI tools in this work, and

acknowledge that there may be disciplinary consequences if I have not followed NUGSE's guidelines regarding AI appropriate use.

Name: Zhumashov Manas

Signature: *Zhumashov*

Date: 22.04.2024