

The Impact of Vocational Guidance on Career Choice

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[Abstract] The study is focused on gauging the impact of vocational guidance as professional support for finding the right career path. Students in their adolescence want proper advice for the right career selection. Both vocational guidance and counseling processes ease the decision of making a career choice. As a result, our young people will have a better understanding of their unique personalities and interests as they select a career path that will allow them to live independently in the future without having to worry about landing a white-collar job or getting stuck in a dead-end job market. Therefore, it becomes imperative to aid students before they take a plunge into setting out on any occupation in life with the goal that they settle on a correct decision.

[Keywords] counseling, career, decision making, vocational guidance

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Introduction

A career is a lifetime occupation that an individual makes once in his lifetime. The process of making a career choice that allows an individual to utilize his/her potential to the fullest is a difficult task. This is where vocational guidance comes into the picture. Vocational guidance is basically succored, which aids a person in choosing a profession. Frank Parson, who is also known as "The Father of Vocational Guidance," in the year 1908, talked about vocational guidance in a book. He developed the concept of vocational training and gave it a systematic form. Initially, he had some doubts about naming the service. Since this was his dream project that he wanted every school to adopt to help students leave their school curriculums and pursue professional courses. In his book, Frank Parson has mentioned the term "vocational guidance" as a process of helping people to select a suitable vocation, academically and technically become a part of it, and attain the necessary skills to be professionally successful. In 1924, the National Vocational Guidance Association was established in the USA. The Association considers vocational guidance as a service for choosing a vocation or occupation, preparing for the domain, entering the respective profession, and experiencing it.

A career is not an end but a process that comprises a series of jobs and job-related responsibilities over a period of time. The career of a person belongs to a specific occupation in which the person evolves with time as he gathers experience. Freire (2012) opines that selection of a career and related development should start at the elementary level of a student, and as the student progresses through his schooling, it eventually gets a proper shape.

In choosing their career, students mainly consult or get influenced by parents, teachers, relatives, friends, and media. Many individuals choose a career due to the influence of friends, relatives, or close acquaintances' success in their respective professions. Family pressure, parent pressure, and family tradition also play a vital part in many students' career choices. In any case, an occupation is chosen simply on the belief that it's the most interesting one and has a vast chance of progress. It is very usual to see that people often ignore their actual interests, aptitudes, or personality traits because of family pressure or the influence of another person or group. Professional success largely depends on these aspects.

According to Stern (2017) most of the time, students go wrong while choosing a profession for themselves. In this context, it's noteworthy that career choice is a matter of several external reasons and a few personal reasons. According to Braak (2001), students who don't change their majors according to their personal preference and aptitude soon start showing non-adaptive behaviors. Braak further adds that students need vocational guidance for appropriate career selection.

The sole purpose of vocational guidance is to guide a student in making a proper decision regarding his/her career. As such, vocational guidance serves a special meaning in the professional lives of people. Various aspects of vocational guidance include the following:

- To help students be clear about their careers.
- To help students understand the professional world.
- To help t students develop essential career management skills.
- To extend individual guidance and group guidance for selecting the right career path.
- To assist students in decision-making regarding their career selections and initial vocational courses.
- To help students in decision-making regarding advanced vocational or career-oriented courses.
- To provide printed and digitalized services for delivering correct and need-based information to the students.

Systematic vocational guidance is helpful to the education system of a country and the labor market. As far as the education system is concerned, the vocational education part of the system plays a vital role in the career development of the students and the economic development of a country. The foundation that vocational guidance develops in a student includes self-assessment, decision-making skills, core competencies, and career management. Vocational guidance helps a person develop strong knowledge or skill in the following aspects: understanding the professional career; purposeful decision-making, and self-awareness

Role of Vocational Guidance in the Development of Socio-Economic, Labor-Market Quality, and the Education System

Some researchers have highlighted that vocational guidance has contributed significantly to the systematic development of the education sector and improving the labor market quality. The vocational guidance makes it possible through consistent endeavor to raise people's interest in vocational training and help them select the right career paths through formal and informal learning. The infrastructure that vocational guidance has created for students and everyone directly linked to the students has directly and positively influenced people's interest in vocational training and job search activities. This has been proved very helpful by improving awareness regarding different vocational training sectors and types of jobs available in the market.

In the USA, some studies have been accomplished that show that vocational guidance has positive effects on the vocational decisions of the students and evolving professionals. The studies also show that vocational guidance improves the quality of education in educational institutions.

Vocational Guidance for Lifelong Learning and Social Equity

Vocational guidance develops the culture of lifelong learning in both adolescents and adults. It helps to create human resources, which is a key to the economic development of a nation. Vocational guidance contributes significantly to the development of a strong linkage between training and education. Many

countries around the world have acknowledged the necessity of vocational guidance for establishing updated course curriculums in educational institutes and enhancing the quality of human resources. Another hallmark of vocational guidance is social equity. In some European countries, like Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands, it is believed that vocational guidance brings harmony among migrant and native populaces. It can even address the ever-increasing polarization of the labor market, enhancing female participation in the labor force of a nation and decreasing gender disparity in the labor market. Education and employment are two scalable parameters of social equity. Both these parameters show positive signs when vocational guidance is implemented in the schools.

Vocational guidance is not restricted to providing student advice or mobilizing information on the job market to the people looking for openings. It takes care of the lifelong goals of today's adolescents. It shows them how to develop decision-making skills or understand personal traits. Personal development is a crucial part of vocational guidance. Through personal development at the micro-level, vocational guidance helps in strengthening the human resource of a country.

Vocational guidance shows how to develop the skill for the proper career selection. This is a vital area of personal development, especially for unemployed people who are in search of a suitable occupation. With the proper vocational guidance, students can pick the right career and profession. This is called career management, which makes human capital a true asset for the nation.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows: 1) to highlight the impact of vocational guidance in improving the decision-making capacity of an individual; 2) to determine the key factors having a profound impact on the career decision-making processes; 3) to determine the key factors that affect the systematic implementation of vocational guidance.

Functions of Vocational Guidance

The functions of vocational guidance are as follows: 1) Adjustments – Vocational guidance makes adjustments in the educational institutions, working environments, in the society, and within families relatively smooth sailing; 2) Orientation – Vocational guidance makes career selection, career selection, and long-term personal goals easy and fast; 3) Development – Vocational guidance helps the students in getting rid of personal problems and personal development. It also helps the students in self-assessment and self-realization, which contribute positively to the overall development of society.

Vocational guidance at the advanced level inculcates a professional attitude in people. According to Robert Henry Mathewson, vocational training is concerned with helping students in planning broad education and giving them the direction, which may or may not necessarily be their final choice but definitely acts as a step towards the broader aspect of further study and future exploration.

According to Miller, even though students are ready to explore vocation options available to them, they are not prepared to choose and plan for the specialized professions. Providing occupational information to students in their final years in secondary or tertiary levels is considered enough vocational guidance. That is to say, just introduction to various occupations is sufficient. At this stage, the collection of vital information, like abilities, traits, aptitudes, and interests, is considered necessary. Information about the students could be gathered through observation and different psychological tests. After the collection of vital details, those should be discussed with the students to give them an idea regarding their personality traits, which will help them in understanding their abilities in a more candid way.

Importance of Vocational Guidance

The importance of vocational education guidance in the life of youths cannot be overemphasized, especially in this 21st century in which technology is taking the lead. Significance of vocational education guidance:

- Vocational education makes job placements more appropriate and results-oriented.
- Vocational education helps students in choosing the proper vocation that they would love to continue in the future.

- Vocational education strengthens the education system through its correct information and guidance to students.
- Vocational education makes people more confident, which further results in a more robust economy.
- Vocational education provides need-based information regarding job opportunities in different disciplines that make students aware of the job market.
- Vocational education encourages students to be self-reliant and make the best of decisions with regard to their careers.
- Vocational education lets people understand the problem of unemployment and why it is a subject of concern for the government.
- Vocational education empowers students to understand how choices are made and the possible consequences of their decisions.
- Vocational education let student understand themselves in a much better way, providing them information of their abilities, traits, aptitudes, and potential skills.
- Vocational education empowers students to gain knowledge of the applied procedures needed for using for and getting a job.
- Vocational education assists students in focusing on their abilities, interests, and qualifications that help them to be visible in the job market.

The 3 Stages of Making Career Choice

Ginsberg's theory depicts that one achieves vocational maturity and makes occupational choices in three consecutive stages. These three stages are described below:

The First Stage: This first stage is called the fantasy stage. At this stage, the child may show some interest in vocational training but may not be aware of personal traits and choices. This is the stage when a child ideates different high and extraordinary professions but is not much aware of the consequences or demands of those professions. In this stage, the child is also influenced by others.

The Second Stage: The second stage is called the tentative stage. In this stage, one starts ideating a future profession and collecting information on it. In this stage, the student is a bit responsible about his choices and tries to bring some sort of rationality in whatever he thinks and expresses regarding what future profession he wants to choose.

The Third Stage: The third stage is called the realistic stage. This is when one starts showing actual interest in different occupations available in his surroundings. All the three stages of vocational maturity are the three consecutive levels that come one after the other and include some professional development in a student. There are three indicators of professional or vocational maturity:

- Indicator 1: Recognition of the need to decide on various vocational choices.
- Indicator 2: One's capability of managing and handling responsibility, making career plans, and taking specific decisions regarding vocational choices.
- Indicator 3: One's enhanced, somewhat detailed knowledge about different workplace environments related to other professions.
- This way, people become mature enough to make vocational decisions.
- Indicator 4: One's feelings about the profession that he is practicing. He is either satisfied or dissatisfied with this profession (Szabo & Suen, 1998).

Role of Vocational Interests

One's vocational interest depends a lot on several factors. The most prominent characteristics are the selection of primary and the choice of vocation. The Asian Development Bank (2008) asserts that there is a close link between a student's interest and the appointment of a major. It further reveals in its research paper that this relationship is more robust in smart, older people. Understanding this aspect well, teachers can influence students regarding career choices by finding their real interests.

Students need strong support in exploring different occupations and understanding the workplace environments related to those professions. Counselors can undertake psychological tests for the vocational

interests of the students in a school for finding the fields of interests of the students (EU Commission, 2005). Counselors should provide all essential information the students should know before taking professional interests to grow in them. Having the knowledge of the sound, capability, personality traits, and aptitude of a student also provides vital support to the counselors in helping students in career choices, which will in the future make them content professionals who are happy with his/her choice of career.

Personal interest has a multifarious influence over the occupational choice that one makes. Success and happiness come out of a profession later in life when a preferred domain is in perfect tandem with personal interest. According to Apple (2014), developing interest in a specific occupation is a matter of maturity and the correct information. The right choice in the early stage of life makes people happy and proud of their profession and career choices. Guilford, an American psychologist, defines personal interest as a natural behavioral tendency that attracts an individual towards a particular type of activity, not others.

Personal Interest Has the Following Dimensions

Emotive Dimension: This dimension refers to the feelings associated with practicing a specific activity that an individual personally likes or dislikes. Such feelings can be positive, such as happiness and enthusiasm, or negative, such as anger and hatred.

Cognitive Dimension: This dimension refers to a person's acquired information and related knowledge regarding the activity in which he/she has a keen interest. For example, a student may have a strong preference for a specific major because of the knowledge or information he/she has gathered has created a positive opinion about the activity. Such information may be right or wrong. However, the individual thinks the information is correct from his perspective.

Behavioral Dimension: This dimension refers to the activity's consequence to the above-mentioned information and knowledge and then the developed feelings. Dr. John Holland, who was an American and professor and the inventor of the career development model in his theory, which is known as Holland's theory, illustrates the way people make their occupational preferences. The idea finds a process for making occupational choices and consistency in practicing the occupation or developing skills related to the field according to the personality trait of the individual. According to Holland, people who practice a specific profession might have several common characteristics. He further thinks that students are different in terms of vocational interests. Such differences in vocational interests are created due to differences in finding the opportunities, family or social pressure, self-knowledge and self-awareness, and family or personal conditions. These factors have multi-dimensional effects on the unique career choice of individuals. Holland thinks that people need individual attention during the developmental stages that in turn makes knowledge and interest in various fields stronger (Agir, 2014).

The Importance of Vocational Information for Youth and Working Adults

Ogundele (2010) says that the vocational development of the youth and the preparation and guidance they receive to get employed should be of interest to them. He further states that the children and working people should have relevant employment skills that enhance their demand in the job market, which, in the long run, will make a nation economically solid and prosperous. So, it becomes imperative to offer formal and non-formal training to the students. This is why the following aspects related to various occupations are essential:

1. Both non-employed youths and employed people should be exposed to various occupational prospects.
2. Both should know the workplace environments and hazards.
3. The minimum requirements in terms of qualifications or work experience to get a job.
4. How the successful people in different professions are doing, and why are they successful?
5. What kind of education, vocational education, and vocational training is required to get a particular job?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a particular job?
7. Both non-employed and employed people should be aware of licenses and other requirements related to jobs.

8. Knowledge on wages, how the wages are paid, and what can stop compensation related to a job.
9. Other benefits in the short-term and long-term that a particular job can fetch.

According to Albalawi (2013), technical education and training make people suitable for a job and also prepare them to accept the challenges that a job can create in the future. From this aspect, vocational guidance plays a vital role in technical education. Here are those crucial roles:

- It makes students aware of themselves, which helps them discover their hidden potentials.
- It enables the students to make personal choices regarding occupation and career without taking much help from reference groups or parents or surrendering to social or familial pressure.
- Professional guidance and counseling assist the students in their talents and self-interests.
- Professional advice and counseling help the students discover strengths and weaknesses, social and familial expectations, and expectations of the nation.
- It helps them understand the minimum entry requirements in occupations, workplace issues and hazards, and rewards and career prospects related to a specific domain.
- With proper guidance and counseling, people become more advanced in terms of career management.
- With appropriate guidance and counseling, it becomes easy for the professional to be aware of feelings, like anger, frustration, depression, and the ways to deal with them.
- It helps non-employed and employed people find alternative career paths in case the chosen approaches fail.

Changing Scenario In The Working World

Modern society is rapidly changing. A few occupations are slowly becoming obsolete while newer ones are emerging. A few decades ago, people did not know about computer professionals, perhaps not even dream about them. On the other hand, it is difficult for many youths of today to believe that there used to be an occupation called “runner,” the fastest form of sending information. One must know that a few professions as we know them today will cease to exist tomorrow. Perhaps by the middle of the next century, we will not have any postmen or human customer services in banks. Robots will replace many industrial operations. With sophistication in the industrial sciences, there will undoubtedly be further redundancies to serve the need of time, and there will be appropriate addition in the list of professions, too. Hence, it is imperative for one to know not only about the present trends but also the emerging scenario in the world of work so that he can make the right decision and select the right career (Chen, 2010).

A time comes in one’s life when he/she has to decide on the type of occupation he/she is best suited for, the kind of vocation he would like to pursue, and the career he wants to build through his or her life. This process of decision-making has been a subject of study and a topic of interest for many psychologists, sociologists, and educationists. Thus, choosing a career is undeniably a very crucial decision in an individual’s life. Career development is a part of one’s overall development and is a continuous process. Chhavi (2014) suggested a functional classification of vocational development theories.

The Essence Of Career Oriented Education

In today’s world of rapid technological and economic change, uncertainty about skill requirements in the workplace, and great learning and vocational paths, vocational planning is more complex than ever. Nevertheless, where youths have the relevant skills that match their interest and ability, they tend to have a saleable profession. The essence of career education among youths cannot be undermined. It has several advantages: 1) It helps youths to develop the knowledge and skills they need to determine a career path. 2) Youths can make an informed decision in developing a career through the study of various occupation tools that facilitates learning through hands-on training in conjunction with academic subjects. 3) Occupational training provides a means of developing the youths’ knowledge, understanding, and experience of opportunities in education, training, and employment. With the current trend of the global environment of jobs, youth should be capable of adopting appropriate steps that will lead to a good career choice. The children should be able to learn and understand themselves and their abilities; learn about their values,

interests, and skills; be in contact with career counselors for advice; discover and look over the lists of available occupations; check occupations that have been considered previously but which are now appealing; look at the job description, educational and other requirements, job outlook, advancement opportunities, and earnings; contact individuals who have firsthand knowledge of the occupations; consider and be capable of earning the advanced degree/certificate in such careers, and put a plan in place, set some goals, and decide on how to reach the goals set. When someone develops the ability to make the right choice of career, it results in making profitable employment after graduation.

Introducing Different Careers To The Youth

When the students are exposed to different careers in their early lives, it will arouse their curiosity and interest. It can be facilitated in the following ways: Inviting professional experts and business leaders to address youths on job opportunities; Assigning need-based activities to explore students' talents in future careers; Matching individual personalities and considering how they would fit a particular career with their traits, which will also involve their temperaments; Considering socio-economic and ethnic values of a community and how they relate to careers in the community where the students live; Inviting male and female role models in different fields to address youths.

Literature Review

The study of Jarwan (1986) tries to explore the utility of vocational guidance on developing vocational maturity in students in secondary and tertiary levels of schooling in different public schools in Amman. The researcher segregates the students into two groups: the experimental group, and the control group. The study makes it clear that vocational guidance plays a prominent role in enhancing vocational and occupational decision-making abilities in students at different levels of schooling.

The study of Flied (2002) aimed to explore the influence of vocational guidance in developing vocational maturity among 9th-grade students. In this experiment, the researcher segregated the sample into two sections. One section belonged to the experimental group, and another area belonged to the control group. The researcher conducted 12 sessions per week for the experimental group, who were imparted vocational guidance systematically, whereas the control group was not given any such classes. This study points out that vocational training has profound effects on the career choices of the students. It also points out that there is a gender difference in personal understanding of the relevance of career choices where male students are more enthusiastic in career choices personally than their female counterparts.

The study of Al-Miskr et al. (2009) aimed to explore the personal career preference differences between male and female students. The sample of the experimental research belonged to BA students in seven diverse departments in three different Malaysian universities. There were 238 male and female students with an average age of 21.65 years. The study was segregated into two parts. The first part included several questions related to demographic characteristics of the students, such as age, gender, major, native place, economic status of the family, etc., whereas the second part included vocational guidance in which Holland's vocational guidance aspects were considered. The research outcomes were statistically analyzed. It was discovered that vocational maturity is gender-sensitive, especially in the matters of gathering real-world information and ideating entrepreneurship. The latter was more prominent in female students.

The need for vocational guidance was felt a few decades ago, but the concept is still in its early stage. Youngsters or adolescence are still facing the problem of unemployment (Jarwan, 1986). At present, schools are offering a greater variety of subjects. The concept of multipurpose schools has come up with a variety of occupational courses, private coaching, and classes provide training courses for excellence in different skills, yet the employer and employees are not satisfied with the actual work situation. These circumstances reveal that youngsters need guidance in career selection. Students at the age of 14 or 15 years in class Xth are mostly confused about the course they can select for a better and brighter career later in life. This happens due to the lack of knowledge regarding various vocational courses and the scopes of those vocations. A student is neither aware of the different vocational practices, nor is he capable of analyzing his own needs and abilities (Al-Miskr et al., 2009). Youngsters can go to state-organized bureaus for guidance

and do psychological tests. This sort of guidance would be superficial due to the influence of various unavoidable factors. Vocational guidance will be more effective if given in the school environment during the educational process in which individuals can be observed in their natural capacity. Besides, students will feel more comfortable in the school atmosphere, with guidance experts in resolving their vocational guidance needs, which will infuse in the student a positive attitude towards suggestions made by guidance experts. They must accept offers of guidance experts willingly rather than taking them as a constraint on them (Bubany & Hansen, 2011).

Expected Outcome

A career is a lifelong process, and vocational coaching plays a vital role in the decision-making process of young people. With so many avenues available to help our young people realize their full potential, vocational coaching can help our youngsters make a meaningful career choice. When it comes to deciding on a career path, vocational assistance is a necessity. Vocational advice has a significant impact on students' job choices, and it reduces the number of school leavers being unemployed. Student knowledge of the link between making a vocational choice and labor market demands is critical to developing vocational counseling programs. Vocational advice and counseling should be incorporated into the curriculum at all levels of schooling, with different objectives based on the needs of the students at each stage of their educational development. This would give students a solid foundation from which to make informed judgments about their futures in high school and college. The result of well-formed and realistic beliefs about one's self and the world of work is also critical throughout the secondary stage. Our youth's future should not be wrecked by a lack of vocational counseling in professional choice and technical education. These people will not only be able to maximize their potential, but they will also have a positive impact on the community as a whole. The availability of sufficient funds will, therefore, open the door to fully fund vocational guidance, which will color the recruitment of qualified personnel, like technicians, technologists, career counselors, and others, all of whom will re-orient our youth towards a promising future in their choice of career.

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