

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF CAREER GUIDANCE ON STUDENTS' CAREER ORIENTATION IN CHINA VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

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Abstract – There are several reasons behind the incorporation of the strategy of career guidance for students; one of them is to support students in the process of making appropriate educational and occupational choices and ensure the meeting of life goals. The main issue is that the universities have failed in the recruitment of the best vocational tools and resources that could help the candidates in achieving the best scope of a futuristic approach. The problem is even still intact because of the pressure and enforcement of the career and lack of support to the student to independently opt for a career for them. Moreover, owing to the high competition in the job market at present, career counsellors have to fight the quick-fix psyche where students expect their confusion or doubts regarding a certain career or their own skill sets can be fixed quickly after consulting a counsellor. Hence, it is necessary to investigate how career guidance impact students' career orientation before suggesting ways to assist students' career orientation. The purpose of this study is to investigate how career advising and guidance affect college students' career orientation. A mixed methods strategy incorporating surveys and interviews will be employed. As a result of increasing awareness related to the process of career counselling and career orientation, students may find appropriate career options which fulfil their personal preferences and strengths. It makes the students highly encouraged to show an effective rate of engagement within their professional life and brings several advantages to the organization as well. Hence, it can be stated that career counselling can increase the efficiency of the job market and improve effectiveness in different industries. This particular situation further improves the quality of living by getting quality support and services from different industries without any sort of consequences as well.

Keywords – Teachers' Perspectives, Higher Vocational Education

I. INTRODUCTION

The career vocational guidance affects the national career development as well as the overall employment approach of China. This research is based on the subject of the study, the role of counsellors' guidance to university students in order to help them cope with better career decisions. The research analyzes the failure of the career goals of the students due to a lack of career guidance in higher education. The lack of a better career approach leads to the ultimate self-efficacy of the

students in the unfavourable career field they tend to choose.

This also impacts the inability of the students to apply their skills in the appropriate as well as passionate career. Hence this causes job dissatisfaction in the career approach of the students (Putri et al., 2022).

As per the researchers, the sole dependency of national growth and development in the fields of innovation and economy is on the right career pathways of the students. The researcher in their study depicts that the right career approach derives the swift flow of income for the individual. This also supports the fact that enhancement in the overall rate of GDP in the nation is directly proportional to the consistent career approach of the students in terms of higher studies in the country (Khattab et al., 2022). As per the studies, education is a good medium of empowerment for students. However, the failure of the student to choose the appropriate career may let down the outcomes of the education of the students. In this context, the contribution of the students in the selected field is lesser than the actual passionate student in the same field. This leads to a fall in the salary aspects of the expectations of the students in their career goals.

The ineffective tactics involved in the career guidance sessions lead to wrong career advice to the university student. This impacts the unclear vision of the student in terms of futuristic career decisions ahead. In this respect, the researcher conveys the relevance of the mentoring programme problems in the challenges of career development in the nation. In the same context of the study, the researcher observes that the major impact of the problems falls on the unemployability of graduate students in the country (Okolie et al. 2020). This also demonstrates the value of the counselling session in an effective way for the future development of the nation. In the context of the subject of the study, the researcher observes that the effects of failure in career counselling restrict the upcoming opportunities in the career goals of the student. Hence the study is optimistic towards the perspective of the students with respect to improper career guidance in the universities.

The aim of career advice to university students is to intervene in the career decisive approach of an individual to foster a well-settled professional life. In this respect, career adaptability is as important as optimized career advice to the student. The researcher has observed the areas of difficulties of a student in respect to trying to adapt to a particular career even with their skills in him. The study revolves around the impacts of career advice on students in higher education (Magnano et al. 2021). The subject analyses the effective part of the subject with

respect to the readiness of enablement to switch career objectives of the student. In the study, the researcher observes that the personal development of an individual is solely dependent on the professional development of the same. Hence the researcher highlights the fact that the well-being of the student reflects on the basis of career advantages and objectives.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

There are several reasons present behind the incorporation of the strategy of career guidance for students; one of them is to support students in the process of making appropriate educational and occupational choices and ensure the meeting of goals in life. Meanwhile, there are some challenges presents associated with the process of career guidance that are discussed as follows. Some counsellors were found to be ineffective in counselling skills such as open-ended questions asking and students traits observation. It was also identified that the wrong techniques were used in counselling sessions of university students in China (Delle & Searle, 2022). Meanwhile, the challenges in the career counselling of university students can be a student himself not relying on the career advice and opting for alternative approaches as a second choice (Sensoy-Bridnick & Bridnick, 2022). This leads to the complete failure of career counselling for the particular student ultimately. In addition, some students were unable to communicate their traits and career interests (Delle & Searle, 2022). The primary rationale behind this is, career counsellors become unable to understand the areas of interest and preference of students in the process of selecting appropriate careers. It leads to poor selection of careers, which leads to poor professional outcomes for students and limits their growth in the professional field.

It might be observed that research on the challenges that career counsellors face when providing career guidance to college students in higher vocational colleges is sparse (Maree 2019). While substantial research has been carried out on the use of technology in overcoming certain barriers faced by career counsellors, not much has been done in terms of the actual challenges that they face when providing guidance to college students in vocational colleges who are yet indecisive about their future career (Chan et al., 2018). As a result of this, career counsellors face several challenges is the process of establishing of trust with their fellow students due to a lack of communication and connection. It further leads to a severe gap in the process of selection of appropriate career goals based on their areas of interest.

Career guidance is an essential element to fostering the well-being and peaceful life of an individual that may impact oppositely in case of the wrong guidance system. On the part of the counsellors, it is noted that a major problem with career guidance is the limited access to substantial reach and resources. This presents a major gap that can be attributed to the lack of investment in this industry (Ndlovu & Ferreira 2019). Not only that; but there is also the challenge of an imbalance in the supply and demand of counsellors that practice career guidance for college students (Maree 2018). This imbalance is

essentially indicated by an increasing number of students in need of career counselling but not as many as counsellors actually available to cater to their requirements. As such, it becomes rather challenging to deliver the quality of attention that every student deserves. This is likely to result in inefficiency which has the potential of making people lose their faith in the profession itself.

As the scope of career guidance and counselling is still high in China, which means that an increasing number of students and teachers are gradually realizing the importance and need for counselling, a stark lack of faith in this profession on the part of college students can be detrimental to the country's ability to produce successful professionals contributing to the national economy. In addition to this, there are some stigmas and prejudices present related to the process of career counselling as there is dependency present on family members and parents in the process of career selection. Hence, disturbing the foundational belief may lead to several challenges. In addition to this, the idea of self-concept or carrer identity for individuals is formed based on their surroundings, rather than personal preferences. Thus, the incorporation of career counsellors may lead to situations related to these challenging notions and support students to make their own decisions in the process of career selection as well.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Role of career counselling

Career guidance is an essential component of the student's career role as it guides a student in setting an action plan in order to help the student in wise decision - making in respect to their career approach. Career guidance mainly involves an interactive approach to examine the perspectives, self-efficacy and other factors of the students that fit them into one or a few fields of a profession (Boeve-de Pauw et al., 2022). The counsellor is responsible for advising the right career stages and phases for the students' ease and focused career goals.

Examining the evolution of career guidance and career Decision-making

In an emerging global era and the high technology development within every aspect of business and education, career choices and orientation have been reshaped. Not only economic development but educational transformations are also visions in China (Gruin & Knaack, 2020). Communication technology has evolved and the changes within the same have become unavoidable as a result, the career decisions of the students have been changed as well.

Analyzing the Role of career counsellors for university students

China's rapid and vast economic development has posed a vast and unprecedented challenge to the youth of the country that is focused on their career decisions. The students' decisions determine their careers during their higher education and further career choices. Regarding the pragmatic aspects of labor market development, career

counsellors play a significant role in the career choice of students in colleges and universities. Considering the case of Chinese students the self-exploration and skills analysis might not be fruitful in all circumstances considering the lack of knowledge and inconsistency (Gu et al., 2020).

Role of quality education in higher studies for career guidance

Effective career advising for students depends heavily on high-quality higher education. They acquire the information, abilities, and competencies required for their chosen job routes as a result. According to the observation of Eriksson, Högdin & Isaksson (2018), a comprehensive education improves students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, preparing them to successfully negotiate the challenges of the labour market and make wise career selections. Additionally, a quality education broadens students' perspectives and aids in their career exploration by exposing them to a variety of subjects, businesses, and possibilities. To aid students in exploring and preparing for their careers, educational institutions frequently provide career counselling services, internships, and networking opportunities. In the end, a great education in higher education provides the basis for effective career development and equips students to pursue satisfying careers

Role of University in student development programmes for career guidance

Universities are essential to student development initiatives for career counselling. In order to aid students in exploring and developing their career options, they offer a variety of tools and services. Universities provide career counselling and advising services to students, assisting them in identifying their objectives, interests, and talents as well as offering advice on possible career paths. As per the discussion of Helens-Hart (2019), in order to connect students with businesses and professionals in the field, they organise employment fairs, workshops, and networking occasions. Universities also offer co-op and internship programmes to provide students with hands-on experience and exposure to real-world employment settings. They also provide career development seminars and courses to improve students' employability abilities, including resume writing, interview practice, and networking with professionals. Universities provide students with the skills and information they need to make wise career selections and excel in their chosen fields through these programmes.

Challenges in career guidance for students in higher education

High student-to-counsellor ratios, a lack of personnel and resources, and changing labour market requirements are all obstacles for students in higher education seeking career assistance. Budget restrictions frequently make it difficult for universities to offer complete career counselling services. Additionally, there may not be enough time for one-on-one attention due to the sheer number of pupils seeking advice. As per the discussion of Hou, Wu & Liu (2019), another difficulty is keeping up with the industry needs and the frequently changing labour

market trends. Information and resources about careers must be updated often. Additionally, meeting the requirements of various student populations, such as those of overseas students or those from minority backgrounds, poses new difficulties.

Analyzing the possible strategies for mitigating the issues in career guidance

Universities can use a variety of ways to help students in higher education navigate the problems associated with career advising. In the beginning, obtaining more money and resources can aid in growing career counselling services, hiring more personnel, and lowering student-to-counsellor ratios. As proposed by Kaufmann, Hruschka & Vogl (2020), working together with industry partners can give important insights into how the employment market is changing and assist in better developing career advice programmes. It is crucial to regularly update career materials and information through collaborations with professional associations and alumni networks. Universities should also place a high priority on diversity by providing specialised assistance to students from underrepresented groups and those studying abroad. Accessibility and reach may be improved by implementing technology-driven solutions, such as online employment portals and virtual counselling sessions.

According to this particular theory, in the elementary age group children are highly encouraged to reject certain career opportunities due to the societal message they receive, which leads to negative perceptions related to a particular career. In order to minimise such consequences the demand for Professional school counsellors (PSCs) has increased over time, they emphasised providing adequate support to each of the children and increase the willingness of children to consider a wider range of careers by planning activities that ensure the effective introduction of children to different role models that emphasise on mitigating and removing the existing stereotypical views on a particular career by societal influences (Jones & Hite, 2021). Gottfredson (1981) has emphasized discussing the process of career development of children in four different stages, such as Stage 1 (Ages 3-5), which indicates orientation to size and power, Stage 2 (ages 6-8), which indicates orientation to sex roles, Stage 3 (ages 9-13), and Stage 4 (ages 14 and older), that represents orientation to internal unique self. With the help of identifying the age group to which a particular child has to belong PSCs can easily evaluate the stage through which an individual child going through that can be helpful to understand and evaluate their psychological state and support them for career growth can become easy. As a result of this, it will become easy to increase the rate of motivation of young people to explore a variety of career options by providing resources and information that do not encourage any sort of gender bias.

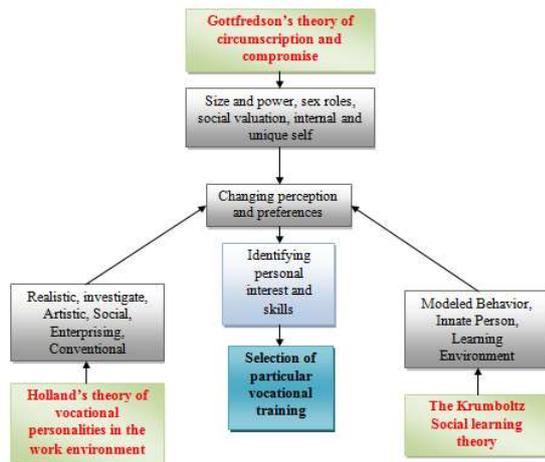


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Ultimately, successful career advising for students can result from a comprehensive and student-centred strategy together with continuing review and development. Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of the study.

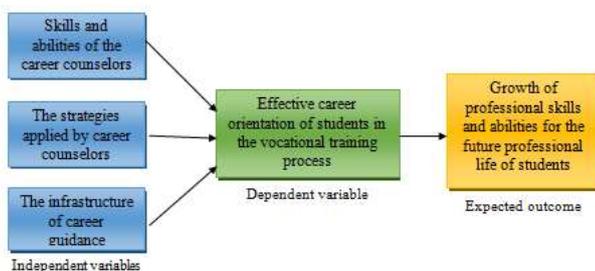


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

IV. METHOD

In the context of the study to be conducted, a positivist paradigm shall be taken into consideration. The rationale behind this choice is that positivists tend to believe that only one reality can be measured and understood. As Alharahsheh & Pius (2020) mentioned, from a positivist position, the research focuses increasingly on discovering regularities or facts that are measurable and observable.

As for the approach to be chosen for conducting the future study, deductive would be ideal as then it would be possible to move from broad generalizations pertaining to the impacts of career counselling on the career orientation of college students to much more specific observations. The overall idea is to test an existing theory instead of developing a new one which can be highly time-consuming, not to mention laborious.

The proposed research shall be exploratory as it shall be an attempt to explore the impacts and influence of career counselling and guidance on the career orientation of students in vocational colleges. The subjective perceptions of the research participants formed the core data of this study.

For this study, the research method that will be taken under due consideration is the mixed method. Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri (2021) opined that a mixed methods approach tends to have its own inquiry methods and philosophical assumptions. For the quantitative method,

the ideal instrument for collecting key insights from the target research participants will be the survey questionnaire. Application of the approach of a mixed method for data collection can become easy, which will help in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data and information, which will support in meeting the expected aim and objectives of the research. In this particular research about 5 career counsellors will be interviewed thoroughly to investigate and review the strategies and approaches they have utilized to provide effective career guidance to each of the students. Along with this, about 200 students will be selected from high schools, who have experienced the support from the career counsellors to evaluate the benefits they have experienced with the support of career counsellors.

In the context of the proposed study, which aims to explore the impacts of career counselling and guidance on college students. Using an adoptive survey questionnaire to collect first-hand insights from the participants can be beneficial in reaching out to a large population that would not have been otherwise possible at a lesser cost and in a time-effective manner (Nardi 2018). In this case, the survey questionnaire comprising 15 questions aimed at assessing the role of career counsellors in higher vocational education and training and shaping the career orientation and mindset among vocational college students would be mailed to the selected participants after having collected their full informed consent. The results of the questionnaire will be assessed and interpreted based on the Likert scale. They can be given a deadline of a maximum of 3 days for filling out the questionnaire and mailing it back. It might also be noted that the simple random sampling technique could be beneficial as it aims to reach a fairly large population. The total number of students in Chinese vocational colleges is around 30 million. Calculating it based on Krejcie and Morgan's model selection of 385 students can be helpful. Meanwhile, selecting 385 students can lead to the results in fractions, to minimize that chance a round figure of 400 students for the survey can be utilized. For the selection of such a large number of students from vocational colleges, a simple random sampling method will be utilized.

The focus shall be on collecting information from 5 career counsellors, who are currently teaching in reputed vocational colleges in China who would be selected with the help of the stratified sampling technique. In the context of the proposed study, the purpose of the interviews shall be to gather in-depth information and data on how students perceive career counselling in their colleges and how it impacts their career-mindedness and orientation.

As the proposed study aims to generate quantitative results using a survey questionnaire, the aim would be to utilize a mix of graphs, descriptive statistics and certain non-parametric inferential statistics based on the SPSS tool. This helps in making the entire process of manipulating, pulling, and analysis of data easy and clean.

As for the qualitative data analysis, the responses can be analyzed using the coding process in MS Excel. As opined by Coates, Jordan & Clarke (2021), qualitative coding signifies the process involved in systematically categorizing excerpts in the qualitative interview data to identify key patterns and themes. This technique enables

researchers to take semi-structured data, such as the interview transcripts, and structure the same into patterns and themes for an extensive thematic analysis.

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