



RESEARCH PAPER

Evaluation of the Career Guidance Facilities in Secondary Schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

¹Dr. Alam Zeb *, ²Prof. Dr. Arshad Ali and ³Mian Said Hussain

1. Assistant Professor Center for Education and Staff Training, University of Swat, KP, Pakistan
2. Professor Institute of Education & Research, University of Peshawar, KP, Pakistan
3. M. Phil Scholar Center for Education and Staff Training, University of Swat, KP, Pakistan

***Corresponding Author:** hmainsaid@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Career guidance assists students in effective career planning at secondary level. It ensures the successful entry of secondary level students into future aspired careers. Therefore the study aimed to evaluate the career guidance facilities in secondary schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Objectives of the study were to evaluate the career guidance facilities in secondary schools and to develop strategies for development of career guidance facilities in secondary schools. Study's design was quantitative nature. Its population was 30439 students. Study's sample was 380 students, selected with simple random sampling. A questionnaire about career guidance facilities was developed, validated and pilot tested for the collection of data. Data were gathered with self-administered questionnaires and analyzed with using mean scores, standard deviations and the chi-square test. The study found the non-availability of career guidance facilities in schools. Services of trained career guides and assistance in subjects' selection was not available. Career support, career planning mechanism and assessment mechanism for identification of students' interests was missing. The study recommended the provision of career guidance facilities in schools. Trained career guides may be appointed. Moreover, assistance in subjects' selections for students and career orientations may be provided to students in secondary schools.

KEYWORDS Evaluation, Career Guidance, Facilities, Secondary Schools, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Introduction

Career guidance facilities are mechanism for the assistance of students in appropriate career planning. The provision of such facilities is an important obligation on the part of every society to assist individuals in achieving successful career trajectories for future. In this regard the period of secondary schooling is a significant one the can make or mar the futures of generations (Wright, 2005). According to Tang (2008) career guidance is the facility for the proper career choices of students at the level of the school and it consists of the analysis of individual student's abilities, career opportunities and the application of individual student's abilities to the available career opportunities. In the backdrop of having significance for students' career development at secondary level, the National Educational Policy of (2009) recommend the provision of guidance facilities in secondary schools of Pakistan to help students' in selection of schools' subjects on the basis of students' interests and aptitudes and not on the basis of traditional conventions. Keeping their career aspirations in mind, students select subjects and courses for their study at this level and they determine the future careers of them. Framing appropriate career aspirations is an important issue for the students of secondary schools which can ensure right career choices for students and may draw a line between satisfactory and unsatisfactory professions for them in future (Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft & Els, 2010).

Ohiwerei and Nwosu (2009) reported that majority of students in secondary schools aspired for prestigious careers like medical, engineering and law though they did not have aptitudes for success in such challenging careers. Majority of students are

unaware from the skills and abilities required for such challenging and competitive careers. That is the main reason that many secondary school graduates are not in position to pursue their desired career aspirations in future after their graduation from schools. This attitude of students results in frustration of youth, as they are unable to get occupations and prestige what they desired, therefore, students of secondary schools need proper career guidance at the level of secondary schools to make realistic career planning for students of secondary schools. In a similar vein, Okafor (2004) identified that majority of secondary school students aspired for the careers of medical, engineering, business administration, accounting, teaching, nursing, civil service and armed forces. It is all due to the lack of appropriate career guidance facilities. Likewise, Onoyase and Onoyase (2009), found that secondary school students are unaware about the selection of right type of subjects and their type of personality which suits the specific careers. Therefore, they often make improper subjects selection and aspire for careers which are not fit for their personalities. The study found students preferred careers as medicine, law and engineering which were not based on the traits of their personalities. This was due to social charm of these careers and the lack of career guidance in secondary schools.

According to Olamide and Salami (2013) career choice decisions are a nightmare for the adolescents, when they are unaware about the competitive world of work and the skills required for it. The students in secondary schools believe that their future career exploration would be a smooth sailing and with the completion of their education at the schools, they would get their desired occupations. Most students in secondary schools plan to become doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers and others in future. They love to enter prestigious careers like medical, engineering and other white collar jobs, wherefrom, they may get material and financial rewards but are unaware that the job market can only provide opportunities to the most competitive ones in future. How successfully adolescents proceed in their future desired careers, depends upon proper career guidance and planning at the level of secondary schools. According to Kiani (2010), in secondary schools of Pakistan, majority of students aspire for the careers of medical, engineering, teaching and armed forces. Students select these careers without information about themselves and the careers they opt for. Therefore, it is extremely important to guide students at the level of secondary schools for having proper career aspirations and information about their personalities, aptitudes, interests and career aspirations for selection of appropriate careers according to their personalities.

Khan (2011) identified that secondary schools' level is a stage where students select their subjects of study and aspire for the future careers, therefore; the teachers of this level play a significant role in the development of proper career aspirations for the future career choices of students at secondary schools. Tabassum (2012) argued that in Pakistan students at the secondary level do not have the facility of career guidance and therefore, majority of students at this level are unable to make proper career aspirations for their future, they blindly follow the directions of those who comes in front of them and are unable to achieve their desired career outcomes in future. Majority of students at the secondary schools' level select traditional careers i.e. doctor, engineer and waste their potentials in pursuit of these professions even if they are not meant for them. It is concluded that career guidance is a significant issue for the students of secondary schools and there is the need for the development of effective career guidance interventions to assist students in proper career planning at secondary level, therefore; the study aimed at investigating the career guidance facilities in secondary schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Literature Review

Evaluating the career guidance facilities in secondary schools, Kiani (2010) highlighted the lack of career guidance facilities in secondary schools of Pakistan and identified the need of trained career guides for the students of secondary schools in order

to help them in the selection of careers according to their personalities and career aspirations. Kiani, Hassan and Irfan (2013) also found the lack of career guidance facilities and trained career guides in government secondary schools of Pakistan, therefore, they recommended the facility of career guidance in government secondary schools and appointment of career guides in schools. Khan, Murtaza and Shifa (2012) studied the role of teachers in the provision of career guidance and identified career guidance as the major area of concern for students of secondary schools.

Maree (2004) identified that students who receive poor or no career guidance at schools from their teachers do not have a clear vision of their future careers. Adejimiola and Olufunmilayo (2009) found that students who lack career guidance at the school usually based their career choice decisions either on trial and error or poor guidance of family members, peers and friends. Jayasinghe (2001) argued that career guidance provides students with clear understanding of self, beliefs, attitudes, interests, resources, ambitions and shortcomings and help them for adjustment in their desired careers. Mekgwe (2010) identified the absence of career guidance facilities, trained career guides or teachers, career guidance services, no provision of the career related information and exploration by the use of social media and career workshops for the students of secondary schools. Merchant (2008) found that the private education network is providing career guidance services through the provision of career information, with the help of seminars, workshops, publications, practical exposure to careers through field visits, internship and scholarship for the future studies of students in their desired careers.

Migunde, Agak and Odiwuri (2011) recommended the provision of necessary career counseling resources and trained career guides and counselors for the proper career guidance and enabling students to make informed and well aware career choice decisions. Career days must be observed at school with the help of guest speakers who are well informed and more experienced in career opportunities. School career guide and counselor play a significant role in the career development of school students by providing information and guidance regarding the available career opportunities and enabling them to adjust with these opportunities (Rashid & Bakar, 2010). Mapfumo, Chireshe and Peresuh (2002) recommended that teachers in secondary schools must understand their role in the career guidance of students and must play it effectively, through assistance in the selection of schools' subjects for the effective career choice decisions of secondary school students. According to Albarta learning (2000) the comprehensive school career development program demands schools to develop a systematic, organized and coordinated career guidance approach at schools to enable the students of making successful career plans for the world of work or further education in their desired careers.

According to Salami (2004) the issue of making improper career choice decisions and the following of imbalance in the professional life of the students demands for the career guidance at the level of secondary schools in order to guide them for the realistic career choice decisions because majority of secondary school students are not mature enough to make the appropriate career choice decisions. Students usually consider the selection of the school subjects to be their career development but are unaware of the implications of their decisions in future to come; therefore, they need proper assistance in the form of career counseling interventions at the level of secondary schools for better career plans in future (Salami, 2005). Lamichane (2012) identified that decision about the right career choice and preparing students for achieving career goals is the key to successful career development at the level of secondary schools. Career guidance in schools helps students to make proper career choices at the level of secondary schools. Singh (2007) highlighted that every individual has a unique personality; therefore, planning career choices based on their personality are appropriate for them. For the assessment of personality assessment tests are used to know the personality, skills and the likely career outcomes for every individual.

Olamide and Salami (2013) identified the establishment of mechanism for the identification of students' interests, abilities and aptitudes in order to adjust them with the future career choice decisions of students. They also proposed the use of portfolios for this purpose in order to have critical reflection on students' interests and potentials for the selection of proper vocations at the level of secondary schools. Papadopoulos (2012) found that innovative career guidance programs help students to plan for the future. Therefore, effective schools' career guidance programs provide practical and vocational learning opportunities, give information regarding careers, arrange career planning activities, ensure community participation, understand students' socio-cultural background, work for the identification of occupational opportunities and adjust students' potentials into the desired future career trajectories. Salami (2007) recommended that career guides in schools must arrange career guidance workshops and seminars in order to help schools' students and their parents in attaining information about career opportunities, students' interest, potentials, aptitudes, career exploration skills, outlining career plans and develop mechanisms for the future career development of students.

According to Irving and Malik (2005) there is the need of career guidance curriculum in secondary schools which will be a set of techniques and strategies that would help students in their preparation for successful life after their schooling. Its scope will also cover the life of students after secondary schools, therefore, it needs to be future oriented, must satisfy local needs and overall global obligations. Byshee, Hughes and Bowes (2002) reviewed the economic benefits of career guidance in schools and found that career guidance is beneficial in the development of life skills of students and their career planning because it helps in their career choice decisions which has important implications for the future successful careers of students. Therefore, they recommended the provision of career guidance curriculum at the schools and outlined procedure for its implementation. In this process, schools must focus on the learning, information and advice of the students in their choice careers which will develop career guidance curriculum at the school. The guidance and counseling curriculum in schools is based on the exploration of self knowledge, skills, information of careers and career planning (Jigau et al, 2007). Career information delivery systems are complete and accurate information packages which takes data from multiple sources and dimensions regarding vocations, work values, working conditions, skills needed and education. They give facilities and opportunity to students for assessing and analyzing their interests and aptitudes and adjust themselves in the available career opportunities (Gillie, 2002).

Osborn, Dikel and Sampson (2011) identified that during the past few years, the use of social media in career guidance has increased and career guidance sector has realized the importance of social media for career guidance. Through its use career guides are now more competent and effective in the delivery of career guidance services to students. Those career guides who are effective users of the internet are more efficient in the provision of career guidance assistance and information to students. UNESCO (2002) recommended that career guidance should provide students with resources and information to make independent career choices. For this purpose, career guidance centers must have books, journals, videos about careers, latest information about careers, career tests and computer based resources.

It is concluded that appropriate career guidance needs the establishment of proper formal career guidance facilities in secondary schools for student, the availability of career guides, career orientations and established mechanism for the integration of students' interests into the available careers' outcomes, therefore; the study aimed to evaluate the facilities of career guidance in secondary schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It will evaluate the career guidance facilities in secondary schools and develop strategies for establishment of career guidance facilities in secondary schools.

Material and Methods

The design for the conduction and reporting of the study was quantitative survey for the evaluation of career guidance facilities in secondary schools. The population of the study was 30439 secondary school students from district Swat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The sample of the study was 380 which was determined with Raosoft online calculator for the determination of the sample for research studies. The sample was selected with using simple random sampling procedure. A questionnaire containing the facilities of career guidance for secondary schools' students was developed, validated with expert opinion of experts in the field of career guidance and pilot tested for the reliability. The reliability of the tool was 0.812. According to Law (2004) if the coefficient of reliability is 0.80 then it is excellent and if it is from 0.60 to 0.79 then it is adequate. The data were collected with using self-administered questionnaires and analyzed with mean scores standard deviation and the chi-square test of significance. Ethical principles for conduction of the study, participants and reporting the findings of research were followed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Evaluation of Career Guidance Facilities in Secondary Schools

Statements	Number	Mean	S. D	χ^2	P
Availability of career guidance/ counseling facilities at the school	380	2.23	.73	38.67	.000
Services of trained career guide/ counselor at the school	380	1.86	.54	52.34	.000
Provision of help in subjects selection by teachers/counselor at the school	380	2.34	.56	45.95	.000
Guidance in career choice decisions of students at the school	380	2.31	.32	66.73	.000
Support in career planning of students at the school	380	2.23	.58	87.28	.000
Mechanism for identification of students' interests and abilities	380	1.56	.34	67.44	.000
Integration of students' interests and abilities with career choice decisions	380	1.54	.84	27.23	.000
Provision of information about career opportunities and job market	380	1.64	.73	45.37	.000
Availability of Career guidance subjects in school's curriculum	380	1.61	.41	81.85	.000
Use of library and Internet for career guidance at the school	380	1.53	.62	63.41	.000

Table 1 presents the evaluation of career guidance facilities in secondary schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The mean scores of 2.23, 1.86, 2.34, 2.31, 2.23, 1.56, 1.54, 1.64, 1.61 and 1.53 demonstrates that the facilities of career guidance facilities, services of trained career guides at schools, provision of help in subjects' selection by teachers and guides at school, guidance of students in the career choice decisions at school, support of students in career planning of the students at school, mechanism for identification of students' interests and abilities, integration of students' interests and abilities with the career choice decisions, provision of information regarding job market and career opportunities, career guidance subjects in the schools' curriculum and use of library and internet for the career guidance of the students at schools are not available to students in secondary schools. On application of the Chi-square test, the findings were found statistically significant.

The findings of the table pinpointed that career guidance facilities, services of trained career guides, provision of help in subjects' selection by teachers and guides, guidance in career choice decisions, support in career planning, mechanism for identification of students' interests, abilities, integration of interests and abilities with career choice decisions, information about career opportunities and job market, career

guidance subjects in schools' curriculum and the facility of library and internet for career guidance are not available to secondary schools' students.

Discussions

It identified that in Pakistani context, career guidance facilities are not available to students of secondary schools and majority of them blindly go for Medical and Engineering and neither they nor their parents have the appropriate information about their own personalities and the careers they select. There are no career guides in schools and little or no guidance is provided by teachers to students for the selection of careers. There is no guidance and help in the career choice decisions and career development in schools. There is no mechanism for the identification of interests and abilities and their integration with the career choice decisions of students. There is the lack of information about career opportunities in schools and there are no subjects of career guidance in the curriculum of schools. As there is no career guidance facilities in schools so there are no facilities of libraries and Internet for the career guidance of students. It is due to lack of career guidance facilities that students of secondary schools usually make their career choice decisions on trial and error basis and have no guided plans in this regard. The lack of career guidance facilities have also been reported by many other studies, like Kiani (2010) discovered the absence of career guidance facilities in secondary schools of Pakistan. Kiani, Hassan and Irfan (2013) found the lack of proper career guidance and trained career guides in government secondary schools of Pakistan. Khan, Murtaza and Shifa (2012) identified career guidance as the major area of concern for the students of the secondary schools in the Pakistani context. Mekgwe (2010) also identified the absence of career guidance facilities, trained career guides or teachers, career guidance services, no provision of the career related information and exploration by the use of social media and career workshops for the students of secondary schools. Maree (2012); Adejimiola and Olufunmilayo (2009) also found that students who lack career guidance at the school usually based their career choice decisions either from trial and error or poor guidance family members, peers and friends.

Conclusion

The study identified that the facilities of career guidance, services of trained career guides, help in the selection of subjects at the schools, guidance in career planning, mechanism for the identification of students' interest and abilities and their integration with the career choices of the students, career guidance subjects in schools' curriculum, career information and the facility of library and Internet for the career guidance of the students are not available to the students of secondary schools and they usually rely on the inadequate information of their parents and family without proper planning for their career choice decisions and usually are on the mercy of trial and error for the choice of their careers, which often results in the poor career choice decisions of students.

Recommendations

Keeping in view the objectives and findings of the study, the researchers made the following recommendations.

- The study recommends the provision of career guidance facilities for the effective career planning of the students in secondary schools. As the career guidance facilities are not available in secondary schools, therefore, it is very difficult for the students of secondary schools to select appropriate subjects of their study at this level, which are based on their interests, aptitudes and knowledge of the career opportunities. The government must appoint trained career guides to facilitate students in career development at the level of secondary schools. These guides will help students in the

identification of their interests and abilities, provision of information about job market and career opportunities and the appropriate career choice decisions.

- There must be collaboration between parents, teachers and schools' authorities for the support of students in career choice decisions. As a friendly relation between home and school is compulsory for making conducive environment regarding career choice decisions of students, therefore, it will help the teachers and parents to know the interests and abilities of the students for making proper subjects selection that may lead them to their desired future destinations.
- The information about job market and career opportunities is an essential element for the better career choice decisions of the students; therefore, the study recommends career orientations, workshops and career days for the students and their parents at secondary schools, for awareness and to know information regarding the career opportunities and job market.
- Career guidance in secondary schools needs the provision of books, brochures, technology and social media. Therefore, the schools must be provided with books, brochures and Internet facility for the facilitation of students, in career guidance.
- The study also recommends the active role and involvement of the policy makers, governmental authorities and community for the provision of material and financial resources to help establish the facilities of career guidance in secondary schools.

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