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Career Guidance and Counseling Needs of Graduate Students-A Study in India

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ABSTRACT

The Department of Adult continuing Education, established at university level to cater to the needs of the teaching, research and extension in the area of adult education. The UGC is providing adequate financial support to this department to organize Vocational Training, Community based Action Research and Career Guidance and counseling. Under career Guidance and Counseling the department has been organizing the programmes like Training programme for degree students, Research, Publication of books and articles. In order to organize career guidance camps, based on their needs and interests, a study was conducted to know the needs of the Degree College students in the area of career guidance and counseling.

KEYWORDS: Career orientation – colleges – skills – students – career guidance needs Adult Education

Objectives of the study:

- To identify the career orientation in colleges for students placement.
- To know the perceptions of the students on the skills possessed by them.
- To know the guidance and counseling needs of the students as perceived by the students themselves.
- To suggest measures to strengthen the career orientation services in colleges.

Methodology

Three Degree colleges under the purview of the S.V.University were randomly selected. 100 students i.e. 50 from Arts and Commerce and 50 form science stream from each college belonging to 1st and 2nd year degree were selected as the sample of the study. To know their perception on the career guidance and counseling needs of the students. Thus 300 students from 3 degree colleges were formed as the sample for the present study.

In order to collect the information from them, schedule on career orientation in colleges, schedule on career guidance and counseling needs of the students, two rating scales on skills possessed by the students were prepared.

The tools developed were administered to the sample drawn from the three colleges; the data was collected, pooled and analyzed as per the objectives of the study. Percentages were calculated and the findings were presented below.

Career Orientation in Colleges for Students Placement:

The process of deciding future career options can be challenging and involves careful considerations on the part of the student, the parents and the educators. All though there are many careers to choose from, individuals have traditionally been limited in there career options especially if they are unprepared for the requirements of the workplace, underestimate their capability or unaware of the range of workplace accommodations that can broaden their career options. Hence, career orientation or guidance is very important in higher educational institutions. It is at this stage that students face many obstacles as they transit from studies to work. It is the educational institutions that have to assume this important role in providing career orientation to the students at this decisive stage of their life. Recognizing this, an attempt was made to know the career orientation in colleges which enable the students to utilize the opportunities and to the career suitable for their abilities and interests in the world of employment.

Table-I
Career Orientation in Colleges

S.NO	Item	Percentages of having the provision					
		Government		Corporate		Total	
		Frequency (100)	%	Frequency (200)	%	Frequency (300)	%
1.	Curriculum						
	a. Employment oriented	40	40	75	37.5	115	38.33
	b. Life skills promotion	10	10	25	12.5	35	11.66
2.	Class-room Training						
	a. Teaching	45	45	71	35.5	116	38.66
	b. Communication Skills	10	10	35	17.5	45	15.00
	c. Group Discussions	5	5	91	45.5	96	32.00
	d. Students Seminars	0	0	85	42.5	85	28.33
	c. Visits to Work	--	--	30	15.0	30	10
3.	Infrastructure						
	a. Equipped library	40	40	94	47.1	134	44.66
	b. Internet Facility	100	100	0	0	0	0
	c. Alumni Interactions	0	0	0	0	0	0
	d. Net working with employers	0	0	55	27.5	55	18.33
	e. On campus Recruitments	0	0	45	42.5	45	15.00
	f. Career guidance cell	70	70	0	0	0	0

Keeping importance of life skills in view, whether the existing curriculum was intended to life skills promotion among the students only 25 per cent of the government college students and 37.5 per cent of the corporate college students said that the curriculum intend to life skills promotion among them.

Keeping the importance of teaching to improve the ability of the students, their opinion on the teaching in their respective colleges was asked. 45 per cent of the students of government colleges expressed that the teaching is good. 35.5 per cent of the students of the corporate colleges said that teaching is good. 25 per cent of the government college students and 45.5 per cent of the corporate college students said that they have that opportunity of participation in group discussion. 42.5 per cent and the participation of the students in corporate colleges are participating in seminars and the students of government colleges have no that opportunity and encouragement from their teacher.

There is no such opportunity of taking to the field work for the students of the government colleges. Only 15 per cent of the students of the corporate colleges said that they have been taken to the work place. Under the infrastructure 47.1 per cent of the corporate college students expressed that they do not have equipped libraries in their colleges. Recognizing the necessity of the internet facility in making students aware of the dimensions of career options, the information was collected from the students on the provision of internet facility in their colleges and found that there is no such provision in the government colleges and corporate colleges have been providing the internet facility. The students of both government and corporate colleges said that there is no such type of net working with employers. Alumni contribute by providing information about additional jobs available in their organizations. In this study we found that there are no such types of interactions in their colleges.

Table-II
Perception of students on the skills possessed by them

S.no	Item	Good	Moderate	Poor
1	Grasping of the subject in the class room	123 (41%)	157 (52.3%)	20 (6.66%)
2	Doubts clarification	84 (28%)	98 (32.6%)	118 (39.3%)
3	Expression of views &feeling	25 (8.33%)	76 (25.33%)	199 (66.33%)
4	Goal setting& hard work to achieve the goal	21 (7%)	52 (17.33%)	227 (75.66%)
5	Self confidence among the students	37 (12.33%)	79 (26.33%)	184 (61.33%)
6	Information seeking on higher education & employment opportunities	27 (9%)	83 (27.66)	190 (63.33%)
7	Utilization of library facilities	73 (24.33%)	86 (28.66%)	141 (47%)
8	Communication skills	18 (6%)	75 (25%)	188 (62.66%)
9	Interpersonal relations with co students	21 (7%)	91 (30.33%)	188 (62.66%)
10	Participation in extra curricular activities	118 (39.33%)	43 (14.33%)	139 (46.33%)
11	Computer knowledge	83 (27.6%)	96 (32%)	121 (40.33%)

The information collected on the perceptions of lecturers on the skills possessed by the student gives a clear picture of the present education. It is good to hear that 41 percent of the students are able to grasp the subject in the classroom. While per cent 52.3 are moderate. Only 20 per cent of them are poor in this category. On the other hand 28 percent of the students are good in doubts clarification. While 32.6 per cent of them are moderate and 39.3 per cent are poor. It is shocking to say that only 8.33 per cent of the students are good at expressing their views and feelings. While 25.33 per cent are moderate. Nearly 62.66 per cent of the students are poor in this category. Among them only 7 per cent are very clear about their goal setting and hard work to achieve the goal. While 17.33 per cent of them are moderate and 75.66 per cent are poor. Coming to the self confidence level among them, 12.33 per cent of the students feel that they are good, while 26.33 per cent say that they are moderate, on the other hand 63.33 pe rcent are poor. The lecturers revealed that 9 per cent of them are good at seeking information on higher education and employment opportunities where in 27.66 per cent of them are moderate and 63.33 per cent are poor. It is quite comfortable to say that, 24.33 per cent of the students are good in utilizing the library facilities. On the other hand 28.66 per cent of them are moderate and 47 per cent are poor.

The survey has suggested that only 6 percent of the students possess good communication skills, while 25 per cent are moderate and 69 per cent are poor. It is surprising to see that only 7 per cent of the students are good at interpersonal relations with co-students. While 30.33 per cent are moderate and 62.66 percent are poor. Coming to the participation in the extracurricular activities, 39.33 per cent are good, while 14.33 per cent are moderate and 46.33 per cent are poor. From this survey we can easily figure out that 27.6 per cent of the students are good in computer knowledge while 32 per cent are moderate and 40.33 per cent are poor.

Table-IV
Career guidance and counseling needs as perceived by the students

S.no	Need	Frequency	Percentage
1	Information on higher education opportunities	300	100
2	Information on Employment opportunities in different sectors	300	100
3	Information on self employment opportunities	85	28.33
4	Lectures cum Training Programmes on (a). Memory Techniques (b). Study skills (c). Stress Management (d). Public speaking skills (e). Resume preparation (f). Communication skills (g). Interview Techniques	 290 210 294 283 293 198 212	 96.66 70.00 98.00 94.33 97.66 66.00 70.66
5	Arrangement of counseling sessions in the campus	297	99.00
6	Interaction with a. Employers b. Industrialists c. Employment & training institutions d. Alumni	 294 182 197 121	 98.00 60.66 65.66 40.33
7	Procurement of books on Career guidance & counseling in the libraries	188	62.66
8	Internet facility in the campus	208	69.33
9	Establishment of Career guidance cell	300	100
10	On campus recruitments	138	46.00

Cent percent of the students expressed the need to have the information on higher education and employment opportunities in different sectors by pursuing different courses. Only 28.33 percent of them asked for information on self employment opportunities. The responses of the sample shows that majority of them need lectures and training on different topics of career guidance like memory techniques (96.66%),study skills (70%), stress management (98%), public speaking skills (94.33%), resume preparation (97.66%), communication skills (66%) and interview techniques 70.66 percent . They said that these programmes & camps will help them to equip themselves with necessary skills for employability.

99 Percent of the students said that the counseling sessions for the students in the college should be arranged by appointing a guidance counselor to overcome the psychological problems like stress, inferiority complex, anxiety neurosis etc.

98 Percent of the sample expressed the need for the interaction sessions with the employers, 60.66 percent with industrialists 65.66 percent with the personnel from employment & training office and 40.33 percent with alumni. They said that this will help them to have an awareness about the employment opportunities, the courses having demand, the skill expectation of the industries and to get motivate & inspire themselves.

The responses of majority of the students elicited that they lack computer skills & non availability of internet facility in their colleges. They expressed the need for the provision of internet facility in the college which will enable them to acquire subject information, career, and educational information and for communication .66 percent said that there is dearth of books in their libraries relating to the career guidance & felt the need of procurement of the books in the libraries.

46 percent said that on campus recruitments will make they easy to get employment & they stressed that the management should take the initiative of training the students for employment & to arrange for on campus recruitment and 100 percent of the students expressed the need of the establishment of career guidance & counseling cell in the college.

Suggestions

- The curriculum should be changed according to the changing scenario of competition, global situations and market placements. In addition to the regular syllabus the information on various courses, sources of employment, required qualifications should be provided.
- Life skills should be promoted among the students through proper training.
- Participation in group discussion and seminars by the students should be encouraged to improve the communication skills.
- Internet facility, alumni interactions and on campus recruitments should be provided in the campus so that the students will have the access to career information.
- Books on topics such as resume writing, interviewing, careers in specific fields, employers brochures should be kept in the library so that the students can equip themselves and develop their ability to choose right career.
- Establishment of career guidance and placement cell in the colleges gives an opportunity to the students to get access to the information of jobs, needs and requirements of those particular jobs. Qualified and trained counselor should be appointed. The colleges should take additional efforts to provide the information on various programmes initiated by the government for the well being of the youth with special focus on the employment generation programmes.

Conclusion

Employment is becoming complex, occupational boundaries are changing and more jobs temporary. These changes present difficulties for the students and are in need of a better understanding of the changes, the implications in terms of career prospects, the skills to adjust to the culture of new industrial working life. Five main elements characterize an education system that is likely to prepare students effectively for this new environment

- Emphasis on career preparation in the colleges
- Skills standards.
- Close connection between vocational and academic institutions.
- Work place learning.
- Links between employers and colleges.

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