

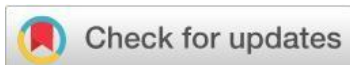
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Assessing the Role of Schools in Career Development of Students in Secondary Schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

Schools' education significantly contributes in the career development of secondary schools' students, therefore; the study aimed to assess the role of secondary schools in career development students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Objectives of the study were to find out the role of secondary schools in career development of secondary schools' students and develop effective strategies for the career development of secondary schools' students. Study's design was quantitative correlational having population 30439 secondary school students from public sector in district Swat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The sample of the study was 380, selected with stratified random sampling. A questionnaire regarding the role of schools in career development of students was developed, validated and pilot tested for the collection of data from respondent students. Data were gathered with self-administered questionnaires and analyzed with using mean scores, standard deviations and the chi-square test. The study found that schools' teachers, schools 'environment, schools' subjects, school fellows and class fellows significantly contributed in the career development of secondary schools' students. The study recommended the establishment of career guidance facilities, career orientations and assessment mechanisms for selection of appropriate schools' subjects as strategies for career development of students at secondary level.

Keywords: Role of Schools, Career Development of Students, Secondary Schools, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.



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Introduction

The environment of the school where students are educated has a significant influence on the career development of secondary school students. They are social agencies for the inculcation of gender appropriate behavior, social skills and occupational planning (Garrahy, 2001). Like parents, teachers are the most influential personalities in the career determination of secondary school students (Barnett, 2007; Khan, 2011). Teachers help their students to select schools' subjects according to their abilities, aptitudes and interests which determine the future career paths of students (Falaye & Adams, 2008). Maree (2009) identified that many students completed their secondary level education without proper career guidance at the school which resulted in the denial of entry into their choice careers and opportunities of higher education for them.

The environment of the school, schools' subjects, teaching methodologies, co-curricular and vocational activities significantly influence the career determination of students. The overall activities of the school pave the way for future careers of students (Bojuwoye & Mbanjwa, 2006). Garrahy (2001) identified that schools are social agencies for materializing the career interests and aspirations of students. Maree and Beck (2004) identified that students who did not receive enough guidance from schools, are often deprived from entry into their desired careers in future. Elizabeth (2012) reported the positive influence of school's environment, teachers and school fellows in the career development and planning of students. Kisilu, Kimani and Kombo (2012) identified the influence of school environment in the occupational choices of the students. Schools' subjects, class mates and teachers were found as influencing agents in the career choice decisions of students.

According to Foskett et al. (2008) schools are important channels for directing the energies of students for their career development in future. Therefore, schools were found as major influencers in the career determination of students and reported that schools shape the career aspirations of students and develop career preferences among them. Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa (2006) highlighted that schools are a significant influence in the career choices of students. They shape the attitude of male and females according to their gender and shape their interests and occupational aspirations. Schools' subjects, teachers' attitude, curricular and co-curricular activities all shape the career choices of students. Like parents, teachers are the key stake holders in the determination of career choice decisions of students.

Falaye and Adams (2008) reported that children from private sector schools were better prepared for future career development as compared to students of the public sector schools. Similar findings were also reported by Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) who found the influence of private schools in better preparation of students for future careers. Schools are very much influential in the career choice decisions of students. They influence the aspirations and expectations of students regarding their future careers. It is concluded the environment of the schools, teachers, subjects of study and schools' friends significantly affect the career development of students at secondary level, therefore; the study investigated the role of schools in the career development of students at secondary level.

Literature Review

Kniveton (2004) identified that schools influence the career development of students. Teachers at school's guide students for the selection of appropriate subjects' combination according to their interests, aptitudes, personalities and desired career outcomes. Denga (2004) highlighted that teachers influence the attitude of students towards careers and shape their career paths for future. The type of schools attended by students also affects the career development of students. In a study by Dondo (2006) reported that the culture of school influences the career development and choices of students because of schools' standards for various academic and co-curricular activities which determine the future careers of students. The guidance services and facilities of career counseling

available to students at the school significantly influence the career related decisions of students. Teachers and school environment determine the preferences of students for various subjects which influence students' decisions about their future careers. Studies have identified the role of school in the selection of careers therefore, male students aspire for science related careers while female for social and domestic sciences related careers and it is due to the role of schools which have taught them about their gender appropriate behavior. So, this situation led male students towards the selection of investigative and realistic careers and females towards the selection of social type of careers.

Kithyo and Petrina (2002) in their study on the role of secondary schools in the career development of secondary schools' students found that male schools were well equipped in respect of science and technology related subjects. Males in co-education schools also took interest in science subjects while girls were found more interested in social and domestic careers because of their gender beliefs framed by the environment and teachers of the schools where they studied and brought up. Lugulu and Kipkoech (2011) found that students in most schools prefer investigative and enterprising careers because their teachers and school fellows influenced their aspirations in favor of such careers. Therefore, schools play a major role in the selection of realistic careers by males and social careers by females due to their concept formulation about their future gender role in the environment of school. Chemeli (2013) that the type of school attended by students is a significant influence on the career development of students. The academic work, subjects and curriculum along with the instructions by teachers give a shaping touch to the career choices of students.

Teachers are an important influence on the career development decisions of students (Barnett, 2007). Teachers' attitude and behavior affect the opinions and outlook of students and influence their future careers and occupational aspirations. Teachers help students in the selection of schools' subjects according to their interests, abilities and aptitudes (Falaye & Adams, 2008). Shumba and Naong (2012) found a significant role of teachers in the career determination of students. Schools are social agencies for the formulation of interests, abilities and career aspirations of students. Schools' subjects, teaching methodologies, co-curricular and occupational activities are significant factors in the determination of the career choices of students. Teachers at the school help in subjects' selection of students, identify career interests and provide support for future career planning. Teachers guide students in selection of school subjects according to their interests, abilities and aptitudes at the school which determine their future careers.

Khan (2011) found that teachers play a significant role in the subject selection and career guidance of students at secondary level. Khan, Murtaza and Shifa (2012) found that teachers play a significant role in the career guidance of students and more specifically in the selections of schools' subjects and future career trajectories for the students of secondary level. Teachers of the secondary level also serve as role models for the future career aspirations of the students. Metheny et al. (2008) found that students are influenced by their teachers as they serve as resource persons for the career guidance of students in schools. Teachers consciously or un-consciously influence their students and pave ways for the future career paths of students. Blenkinsop (2006) reported the influence of teachers' personalities in shaping the career choice decisions of students. Swift (2009) found teachers as powerful influence in the career aspiration of students. They were role models, helped in subject selection and provided information on careers.

According to Swift (2009) Career guides in schools were also found as an important source for the career development of students but some students were found dissatisfied with their role of career guidance. Mapfumo, Chireshe and Peresuh (2002) identified teachers to be significantly influencing the career determination of secondary school students. Goard (2000) found that career guidance counselors are only helpful for a small number of students in schools because majority of students

are more confident in making career choice decisions on the advice of their parents and family. Kiani (2010) found that as in most of the Pakistani secondary schools the facilities of career guidance and trained career guides are not available therefore, the teachers of secondary schools provide informal career guidance to students of secondary schools for the selection of future careers.

Mutekwe, Modiba & Maphosa (2011) found the influence of teachers' attitude, class fellows and school friends on the career development of students. Singaravelu et al. (2005) identified that students' interaction at the school with class mates and other students of the school, schools' activities, career guidance facilities and career workshops had a positive impact on the career development of students. Howard et al. (2009) found school fellows and teachers as an important support for the career development of students in schools. Mutekwe, Modiba & Maphosa (2011) identified the influence of school subjects in the career determination of secondary school students. Schools' subjects determine the career trajectories of students. Students who study arts and humanities subjects aspired for the careers of law, teaching, hotel management and social services while students from pure sciences like Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Mathematics for careers of Medical, Engineering and Pharmacy. Kiani (2010) found the influence of schools' subjects in the career choices of secondary schools. The students who study science subjects aspired to become doctors, engineers and scientists while those of arts aspired for accounting, banking and teaching. In secondary schools, enrolment in science is offered mostly to students with high academic achievement which provide the base for future careers of students in these fields.

It is concluded that the environment of the schools, subjects studied by students, teachers of the school, class fellows and schools' friends contribute in the career development of students. Therefore, the study investigated to assess the role of schools in career development of secondary schools' students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. It not only assessed the role of the schools in career development of students but also assists in development of career guidance interventions for the students of secondary schools.

Research Methodology

The design for the conduction and reporting of the study was quantitative survey for assessing the role of schools in career development of secondary schools' students. 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 about the role of secondary schools in career development of 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 0.803. 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

Table 1: *Role of Schools in Career Development of Students*

Statements	Number	Mean	S. D	χ^2	P
School's environment determined your career	380	3.82	.45	51.54	.000
Teachers determined your career choice	380	3.87	.87	67.34	.000
School's Career Guide determined your career	380	2.44	.74	48.85	.000
School's Principal/Head determined your career	380	2.32	.39	87.96	.000
Class fellows determined your career	380	3.62	.47	55.75	.000
School fellows determined your career	380	3.53	.36	76.52	.000
Career guidance facilities in school determined your career	380	2.34	.89	84.03	.000
School's subjects determined your career	380	3.92	.77	43.16	.000
School's Co-curricular activities determined your career	380	2.33	.23	20.30	.000
School's Vocational activities determined your career	380	2.27	.92	45.79	.000

Table 1 demonstrates the role of schools in career development of students at secondary level. The mean scores of 3.82, 3.87, 3.62, 3.53 and 3.92 identifies that students agreed that schools' environment, teachers, class fellows, school fellows and subjects studied in schools played their role in career development of students at secondary level. Respondent students disagreed about the role of schools' career guides, schools' principals, career guidance facilities of the school, schools' curricular and vocational activities in career development of students in secondary schools as shown by the mean scores of 2.44, 2.32, 2.34, 2.33, 2.27. On application of the Chi-square test, the findings were found statistically significant.

The above findings illustrated that schools' environment, teachers, schools' subjects, school fellows and class fellows significantly influenced the career choices of students. Schools' career guides, schools' principals, career guidance facilities of the school, schools' curricular and vocational activities were not found as major influences on the career development of students.

Discussions

It showed that schools' environment, teachers, subjects taught at the schools, school fellows and class fellows are significant factors of the school which significantly influence the career choices of students in secondary schools. The teachers are the career guides and source of inspiration for the career choice decisions of the students, the environment of the schools are the preparation grounds for the future careers, the subjects taught at the schools are the sources of mental preparations for the future careers and the schools' fellows and class fellows are the source of guidance and healthy competition to excel one another in the pursuit of desired future careers. Schools' career guides, schools' principals, career guidance facilities of the school, schools' curricular and vocational activities were not found as major influences on the career development of students. It may be due to

the non-availability of these facilities in secondary schools and lesser or non-regular interaction of principals or schools' heads with students. The findings of the study have also been highlighted by other research studies, Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa (2006) found that the environment of the school, schools' subjects, teaching methodologies, co-curricular and vocational activities significantly influence the career development decisions of the students. Similarly, Garrahy (2001); Maree (2004); Shumba and Naong (2012) found a significant role of teachers and schools' subjects, in the career determination of students. Teachers guide students in the selection of school subjects according to their interests, abilities and aptitudes at the school which determine their future careers. Similarly, Khan (2011) and Khan, Murtaza and Shifa (2012) found that teachers play a significant role in the subject selection and career guidance of the students at the secondary level. Likewise, Singaravelu et al (2005) and Elizabeth (2012) reported the positive influence of school's environment, teachers and school fellows in the career development and planning of the students. The influence of the schools' subjects has also been reported by a number of other studies, about the effect of schools' subjects, Kiani (2010) and Mutekwe, Modiba & Maphosa (2011) found the influence of the schools' subjects in the career development of the secondary schools. The students who study science subjects aspired to become doctors, engineers and scientists while those of arts aspired for accounting, banking and teaching.

The study did not find the major influence of the schools' career guides, principals, facilities of career guidance, co-curricular and vocational activities of the school on the career development of the students. These findings might be due to the non-availability of career guides and guidance facilities in schools where the study was conducted. As for the principal, so, students have very little or no interaction with the principal of the schools. As for the co-curricular and vocational activities, so such activities are rarely arranged for the students of secondary schools, where the study was conducted. These findings are contrary to the findings of the study by Dondo (2006) who reported the significant influence of schools' career guidance facilities, guides, heads, co-curricular and vocational activities on the career choices of students.

Conclusion

The study showed that schools' environment, teachers, subjects taught at the schools, school fellows and class fellows are significant factors of the school which affect the career development of students in secondary schools. The teachers are the career guides and sources of inspiration for the career choice decisions of the students, the environment of the schools are the preparation grounds for the future careers of students, the subjects taught at the schools are the sources of mental preparations for the future careers and the schools' fellows and class fellows are the source of guidance and healthy competition to excel one another in the pursuit of desired future careers. The study did not find the major influence of the schools' career guides, principals, facilities of career guidance, co-curricular and vocational activities of the school on the career development of the students. These findings might be due to the non-availability of career guides and guidance facilities in schools where the study was conducted. As for the principal, so, students have very little or no interaction with the principal of the schools. As for the co-curricular and vocational activities, so such activities are rarely arranged for the students of secondary schools, where the study was conducted.

Recommendations

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. For the effective career guidance of the students, there is the need to know the interests and aptitudes of the students in secondary schools. Therefore, the study recommends the establishment of assessment mechanisms for identification of students, interests and aptitudes and the integration of these with the career choice decisions of students.
4. Teachers are the key players in the subjects' selection and career choice decisions of the students in secondary schools. The students at this level have maximum interaction with their teachers. So, keeping in view the role of teachers in the context of career planning of students in secondary schools; the study recommends the development of career guidance, as an integral part of teachers' education/training programs to equip them with the required skills and know how about the career guidance of students.
5. Career guidance in secondary schools needs the provision of books, brochures and social media. Therefore, the schools must be provided with books, brochures and Internet facility for the facilitation of students, in career guidance.

Areas for further research

1. The study recommends future research on the career development of students in the institutions of Higher education and Universities of Pakistan.
2. Due to limitations of the resources, time constraints and feasibility reasons, the study was delimited to the career development of public sector secondary schools' students only, therefore, one potential area for the future researchers might be the study of career development of students in private sector secondary schools.

Another area can be the comparison of career development of public and private sector secondary schools.

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