

Abstract

Since 1950s, the government has emphasized that career guidance programs should be implemented in the schools. By doing that, the government expected to guide the students in deciding their appropriate career prospects in future. Although the government has issued numerous circulars about this matter from 1950s, it is still questionable whether the students really got an advantage out of it. At present, there exists a clear skill gap between prospective employees and a variety of career opportunities available within different industries. Thus, this research attempts to examine the impact of career guidance program implementation within schools on skilled prospective employee development.

This research has four objectives namely, to find out the importance of career guidance programs for school students, to identify current practices of career guidance programs within the schools, to examine the barriers to implement career guidance programs within the schools and suggest future development opportunities for career guidance programs within the schools.

Survey research strategy was used to achieve the research objectives. By using the stratified sampling under the probability sampling technique, 04 schools were selected as a sample. From each selected school, 94 students from grade 12 (representing different subject streams), 4 teachers assigned to career guidance programs, 16 Advanced Level class sectional heads and 16 parents of grade 12 students were randomly selected. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. Collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques.

The findings revealed that career guidance programs conducted by schools are having an impact on students in selecting the Advanced Level subject streams and deciding future career prospects. Also, it was revealed that career guidance units at schools have conducted numerous programs with help of external resource personnel. Few barriers faced by schools in successful implementation of such programs were identified. Less opportunity for students to actively engage with the career guidance unit, lack of use of new technology within the unit, lack of usage of books related to career guidance by students, other responsibilities of the assigned teachers and lack of supervision to improve the quality of the programs are among them.



Based on the research findings, few suggestions for future improvement were derived as follows. In order to properly function career guidance units within schools, it is important to assign a teacher who has a professional training on counseling and career guidance. Also, it is important to closely supervise the programs conduct the career guidance unit. Career guidance units of the schools should facilitate with modern technological equipments. More importantly, these units should conduct programs aimed at sharpening students' skills, knowledge and attitudes to suit the needs of the contemporary world with the help of the external resource personnel.

