

Career Guidance Service in College Libraries : A Proposed Model

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Abstract

The concept of career guidance is centuries old but it got momentum in the contemporary higher education environment owing to the impact of globalization and technological advancements. The UGC and State Higher Education Directorates have assigned importance to career guidance and established career guidance cell or centre in colleges and universities. However its implementation is at snail's pace. The authors opined that the career guidance is a teamwork and librarians have to play a pivotal role. A model for career guidance in college libraries of India is also suggested.

Introduction

Career guidance is not a new concept and its roots can be traced back to ancient times. However, career guidance, in its present form, owes its origin to US and other developed countries. Career guidance encompasses information, guidance and counseling services to assist in making educational, training and occupational choices. Career guidance and counseling programmes in higher educational institutions aim to provide assistance and advice to students to make them more and better informed in their future educational and career choices. It also helps the students to realize their strengths and weaknesses by instilling self-awareness, decision making skills, planning skills, personality development etc. At present there is a greater need to provide career guidance services in the college libraries. Many developed countries have well developed career guidance plans in their educational system from the school level. In India, such planning is not undertaken effectively. In higher education institutions libraries are meeting mostly the career information needs of the students through informal and few formal means. Hence, there is a need to plan and organize this sector.

Information and communication technology has influenced the way in which career guidance is provided to the graduates and other adults. Western countries

are undertaking many research activities in the area of career guidance as they realize its importance and see it as a key tool for personal development and to connect person and occupation based on the interest and aptitude of the individual concerned. They use software packages like SIGI³, SIGI PLUS, DISCOVER etc. to provide career guidance. These facilities are not in use in Indian higher educational institutions.

Though career guidance is a century old concept recently it becomes an important issue world wide in view of the changes in the economy brought about by globalization, privatization and emergence of ICT. Information is at the core of career guidance and education; indeed, it tends to prevail over other guidance function.

In an academic institution, library is the focal point where staff and students are energized and empowered with knowledge. Libraries ought to extend their support in all spheres of knowledge and by providing career information in the library it will be helping the users to have an aim in their lives. A quality career service can help the students/graduates to find out their interests and abilities and to attain their dream job in the society. As a quality career resource centre, library can take pride in the development and well-being of its users. To achieve this library staff should strive and adapt according to the signs of the time. It is necessary to provide career information literacy to the graduates so that they will be equipped with the knowledge about how to seek, evaluate and select career information and this may lead to better decision making for the quality of their future life.

Role of College Librarian in Career Guidance

To conduct guidance job efficiently librarian should train himself. In this regard Wiley and Andrew (1955) opined that to efficiently perform this role in the guidance program, the librarian should:

1. Familiarize himself with the services of the guidance program.
2. Secure and file unbound occupational and educational information.
3. Maintain an “occupational shelf” for bound materials.
4. Make the library a laboratory for pupils seeking guidance materials.
5. Acquaint counselors and teachers with new guidance materials reaching the library.
6. Cooperate with administrators, counselors, and teachers in making the library a service point for knowledge acquisition and career development.

Unless the sixth duty is efficiently performed, the librarians cannot contribute their most valuable function. Though college and university libraries play only a partial role in providing career information, they are generally an underused resource. Cooperation between college librarians and career development professionals can strengthen available career information and enhance access, make career development professionals better counselors, and extend relevant library services to their clientele (Paula Quenoy 2003)

Collaboration between career services and libraries strengthens the quality of services for each entity and provides greater access to information for students. According to Fourie (2004), in order to carry on their role the librarians should focus more on affective skills and characteristics such as:

- enthusiasm for lifelong learning and new roles.
- will-power (because nothing will come easily)
- assertiveness
- creative thinking
- self-confidence
- innovativeness

Innovativeness is an important characteristic in internet use and shaping attitudes (Finlay and Finlay, 1996)

Above statement explains that information officer/librarian have a role to play in college career guidance service. Lynch (1994) also mentioned that “career related information appear in a variety of media. Collecting, organizing and disseminating such scattered information need appropriate planning and the use of modern technology. In the era of electronic information, librarians have to play different roles as a maintainer, interpreter, trainer, enabler, liaison and advisor.”

A librarian who is well-versed in the field of information sources and services shall, in addition to indicating the location of material in the library ‘be able to provide guidance in identification of education on training

experiences, in noting agencies which offer such opportunities, in indicating organizations to which one would write for additional information, and in suggesting other career choices which share similar preparations’ (Lary 1985). He is able to provide this intellectual assistance by virtue of his professional education and experience.

As the librarian is familiar with the techniques of current awareness service and selective dissemination of information it would be easy for him/her to provide career information by making use of the electronic media. Present day librarians are trained in information technology so they can make use of the fast developing internet facility for providing effective career information services.

Libraries in higher educational institutions are providing career information to the students but still there is a need to stretch out these services in libraries to reach out and guide the students in their career related needs.

The Status of Career Guidance in College Libraries of India

After Independence several commissions, committees have been established for improvement of higher education in the country. It was in 1956 that a Study Group on Educated Unemployed recommended the establishment of Employment Bureaus in universities to provide their alumni with employment information. Accordingly a number of universities initiated Information and Guidance Bureau. Indian Education Commission (Kothari Commission, 1964-66) recommended to combine Student Advisory Bureau and Information and Guidance Bureau may be combined to form information and employment centre which should function directly under the supervision of the Dean of Student’s Affairs. The functions of the bureau were clearly defined as:

- Creation of awareness among students
- Dissemination of information
- Guidance to foreign students
- Holding orientation courses
- Publishing etc.

Majority of Universities responded to this recommendation. The National Education Policy (1986) brought in a new system of education with increased importance to guidance services at various levels.

Career Guidance in Colleges

Career guidance at graduation level help students to select subjects of specialization which help later on in choosing vocation; it helps to divert the students towards more useful activities. Recognizing this fact, the Government of Andhra Pradesh recognized the need for career guidance in colleges and the

Commissioner of Collegiate Education has issued guidelines (Rc No 63/AC-III/2000 Dt 18-5-2000) to establish career guidance wing in the colleges requested the principals to send a detailed report on the structure and functioning of 'Student Counseling Centre'.

The authors carried out a study on the status of implementation of the G.O. in 40 undergraduate colleges affiliated to Andhra University under government and private managements. The findings reveal that: 75 per cent of the colleges have Career Guidance Cell. In 70 per cent of the colleges the librarian is a member of career guidance cell and in 40 per cent colleges it is a part of the library. However the findings show that the number of students who visit the library for career information is much less (1-50 in a wee); only 7.5 per cent of college students use internet facility for career information. A positive revelation is that more than 60 per cent of libraries have strengthened their collections with career/competitive examinations books and other literature. More than 65 per cent of the libraries are getting important periodicals and news papers on career guidance. 72.5 per cent libraries are displaying career information on bulletin boards; 65 per cent provide career advice; 53 per cent arrange career talks / seminars; but only 2.5 per cent organize mock interviews.

The students' analysis revealed that 89 per cent of them are aware of the career guidance cell though 56 per cent expects more from the Cell. The use of internet is meager as 50 per cent of colleges do not extend internet facility to students hence dependence on print media is inevitable. It may be interpreted that in spite of relevant information available in the library the students are not motivated to use the same. Another related observation is that due to lack of English language skills most of them are using books in regional language (Telugu) and preparing for State level competitive examinations.

It is evident from the study that in spite of establishment of career guidance cell in colleges and making the library/librarian as part of the service, they have not reached the high level of satisfaction. Indeed it should be a coordinated activity with management, faculty and librarian playing different roles. The above study was confined to colleges affiliated to Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The objective is that such service needs to be provided in all colleges of India. Therefore the following suggestions are made based on the findings of the study.

Suggestions for Career Guidance Programmes in College Libraries of India

Some suggestions have been made here for management, faculty and librarian, whose coordinated efforts will lead to effective performance of career guidance programmes.

Tasks of management

As career information is a public good, government need to make sure that it should be freely available to all college students, for reasons of both efficiency and equity.

- Government and UGC have to support the college libraries to get adequate staff and see that they are qualified to hold the positions, so that libraries can provide qualitative services to its clientele.
- From the UGC grant a fixed percentage have to be kept aside for the collection building in career information and also to acquire the necessary infrastructure.
- The State Higher Education Councils / Directorates have to focus on the establishment of career guidance cell in higher educational institutions and make sure that they are functioning in the desired manner.
- It is the duty of the university to make sure that there is a well equipped and spacious library in colleges affiliated to the university and see that they are catering to the needs, especially the career information requirements of the student community. Therefore, University should have a special committee to see the proper functioning of career guidance cell in the colleges affiliated to them.
- College management must make the librarian part of the career guidance cell as its secretary or convener, which will make him/her to take active part in the career guidance activity of the college. The librarian can call for meetings; organize career guidance programmes in collaboration with the faculty.
- It is necessary to include at least one teaching staff from each subject field in the career guidance cell.

Task of Librarian

- Librarians have to take up the task of providing information literacy to students, so that they will be able to search, retrieve, evaluate and make use of right information at the right time, for a right purpose. Librarian has to take up additional workload of career guidance with commitment besides the regular routines.
- Even though libraries face financial crunch it is the social responsibility of the librarian to create awareness about the importance of career information services in the libraries. He/She has to strive to get financial support from the management and other sources of endowment and to acquire necessary tools.
- Librarian can create a congenial atmosphere in the library and encourage the student community to spend their leisure time in reading and browsing the documents and or Internet that helps to set and achieve the goal.

- The librarians have to develop a separate career guidance collection with print and electronic sources. They should also make use of the Internet to download career-related information sources.
- He has to be abreast of the current issues and be knowledgeable with career information sources. This preparation will help him to perform well in delivering the career information.
- Librarian has to work in collaboration with other members of the career guidance cell and faculty in general. He can arrange for invited lectures, organize seminars and discussion groups. Further with the help of multimedia packages he can organize various seminars for career information.
- Librarian can gather career data from print, audio/visual, electronic and web-based sources and maintain special files/folders for easy access by students.
- Librarian ought to introduce variety of career information services that may include – information literacy, career information, career counseling, etc.
- Librarian has to interact with students and ascertain their needs to maintain profiles. He can revise existing programmes or introduce novel ones based on the feedback from the users and suggestions of alumni.

Tasks of faculty

- Faculty should show interest in the overall development of the students. They should understand the students' interest and aptitude and help them to channelize their energy in a productive manner.
- Faculty should make themselves available to listen to the problems of students and try to help them in setting a goal and reaching a career of their interest.
- They have to coordinate the career guidance activities with librarian and see for their effective execution.

Career Guidance Cell For a College Library: Proposed Model

There is a need for a Career Guidance Cell for all the degree colleges accommodated in library

CAREER GUIDANCE CELL/CENTRE

Objectives

- To help students to organize knowledge about themselves by identifying skills, interests and aptitudes.
- To provide information about further course prerequisites, financial aid, academic planning, entrance examinations etc.

- To provide information about specific occupations, career planning, conducting a job search, etc.
- To assist students in the development of skills necessary for decision-making, problem solving, career and life planning.

Organizational Structure

Principal should be the Chairperson of the career guidance cell, the librarian to be the secretary/convener of the cell with independent charge of the career guidance cell. The Heads of various departments and Physical Education Director must be the members of the cell and it must ensure at least one faculty from each subject area.

Finances

The cell should maintain a long and short-range financial plan and budget based on revenues from various grants, viz. state government grant and UGC grant. At least 20 per cent of the grant received for the library needs to be reallocated to build career-related information sources.

- The cell has to monitor the cost incurred in organizing various career guidance programmes and reports to the management
- The cell has to prepare an annual budget that represents its activities.
- The members have to pursue with high authorities to get ad hoc grants to develop necessary infrastructure like computers, telephone, Internet connections, etc.

Information Resources for Career Guidance

The library has to maintain basic collection of career information sources in print as well on the Web. Further the collections have to be updated daily with the help of current affairs sources like news papers and magazines. The librarian has to create and maintain ready reference files with career information for easy dissemination. Some important career information sources are listed in the appendix.

Organization of Information Sources

- Career information sources should be organized effectively for the proper utilization. The documents may be organized using DDC 22 and AACR III.

Services

- The Career Guidance Cell has to evaluate periodically the career information needs and demands of the student community.
- It should provide career information search training program to students.
- Internet facility and free web access have to be given to the students to get career information.
- Career information bulletin board service needs to be made available
- Career awareness service has to be introduced and implemented effectively.

- Organize seminars on interview skills, personality development, communication skills, leadership skill, resume writing, cover letter writing etc.
- Collaborate with other college career guidance cell and share information, sources and expertise.
- Develop strong link with employers and act as placement cell.

Development of E-learning Package for Career Information

- With the help of the computer science faculty of the colleges and subject specialists the cell can develop e-learning packages related to career guidance and these can be shared by college career guidance cells.
- The e-learning package can be of digital video and audio, images, text and other related materials. The data related to guidelines to be followed during the preparation for competitive examinations; model examination papers and related details; the print, e-resources and web resources available for general studies specific subject areas; a selected full-text digitized periodical articles etc. Audio and video interactive lectures by experts in the field should be included in the package.
- The multimedia package thus developed will be linked to the website of the colleges that can be retrieved by the users. It could be used online or offline.

Infrastructure facilities required

The Career Guidance Cell should be a part of the library

- At least three computer systems (multimedia) should be provided only for career guidance purpose.
- Internet facility have to be available for searching different web-sites of courses/jobs, to participate in on-line interviews and tests, sending application, bio-data, etc. via e-mail
- Telecommunication facility may be there for the students to contact the librarian for career information through phone.
- There should be facility to organize and display

the career information material in the career guidance cell.

- Academic environment with pleasant ambience and adequate seating facility needs special focus.

Conclusions

Information is at the core of career guidance and education; indeed, it tends to prevail over other guidance function. From the point of view of the user, information should lead to improved knowledge about the self, about the job market, about education and training opportunities. Libraries have to make a point to extend their services to meet the particular career needs of specific groups. At present most of the academic libraries are providing career information informally but only few are interested in providing proper guidance to the students in the selection of careers. As information organizer and provider libraries can play major role in career guidance activities of colleges. In conclusion it can be stated that quality career information services are the need of the hour to bridge the gap between education and world of work, where in libraries has to play a pivotal role to bridge the gap.

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3. Lary, M.S. (1985). Career resources centre. *Library Trends*. 33(4), 504.
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5. Quenoy, P. and Orgeron, E. (2003) Working with Wisdom: Collaboration Between Career Services and University Libraries. Retrieved May 4, 2005, from World Wide Web <http://www.ala.org/ala/acr/events/orgeron.pdf>
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Appendix
Information Sources for Career Guidance

	Title	Author	Publisher
1.	Opportunities in fashion careers	Dolber, Roslyn	VGM Career Horizon
2.	Agricultural education & career opportunities	Choudhary, SR	Agro Botanical
3.	Careers in beauty care	Aruna Anand	Vision
4.	Careers in foreign languages	Zaheer, Rima	Vision
5.	Careers in hotel management	Agarwal, Arun	Vision
6.	The UBS encyclopaedia of careers	Ghose, Jayanti	UBS
7.	The Penguin India career guide-vol.1 The Humanities	Usha Albuquerque	Penguin
8.	The Penguin India career guide- vol.2 The Sciences	Usha Albuquerque	Penguin
9.	You and your career	Pereira, Joe D	Better Yourself
10.	Career opportunities under the central government	Wagholikar, GA	Creative Career
11.	The right career	Moraes, CP	Astra
12.	Careers in social work	Jamkhedkar, Shilpa	Asian Trading Corp
13.	Career's intelligence and aptitude tests	Malhotra, AM	Bright Careers
14.	Choose your career	Ajay Rai	Vikas
15.	Test yourself: test your aptitude, personality & motivation & plan your career	Barett, Jim	Kogan Page
16.	Career for women	Gupta, Sudha	Creative Career
17.	Career's guide to state bank and its associate banks probationary officer's exam	Malhotra, AM	Bright Careers
18.	Career's model solutions to state bank probationary officer's exam	Malhotra, AM	Bright Careers
19.	Mr. Crewe's career	Churchill, Winston	McMillan
20.	Careers in television and broadcasting	Chaudhery, Amit	Vision
21.	Career coach	Kleiman, Carol	Global Books
22.	Careers in law	Gitanjali Pandit	Vision
23.	Careers in management: MBA & after	Gitanjali Pandit	Vision
24.	Careers in economics	Ranganatha, S	Bright Careers
25.	Career options in Humanities & Commerce	Tandon, K	Career Options
26.	Career's guide to GMAT	Malhotra, AM	Bright Careers
27.	Career's guide to UPSC – CDS entrance exam	Malhotra, AM	Bright Careers
28.	Advertising as a career	Banerjee, Subrata	NBT
29.	Taking charge of your career	Kannan, R	Penguin
30.	Careers	Usha Albuquerque	Puffin
31.	Biotechnology: applications & careers	Meenakshi Munshi	Viva
32.	Career discovery program	Chapman, Elwood	Viva
33.	Career in 21 st century job market	Farhathulla, TM	Bostan
34.	English for career development	Asoka Rani, T	Orient Longman
35.	How to get a college degree via the Internet	Sam, Atieh	Magna
36.	Vocational guide for the young and enterprising	UBS	
37.	Universities handbook	AIU	Association of Indian Universities

This can be supplemented with web based resource

<http://www.careeronestop.org>
<http://www.ajb.org/>
<http://www.servicelocator.org/>
<http://www.careervoyages.gov/>
<http://www.ntis.gov/nac>
<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>
<http://www.opm.gov/disability>
<http://www.hihohiho.com>
<http://www.guidance-research.org/>
<http://www.lifework.ca/>
<http://www.bls.gov/home.htm>
www.bfit.edu
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cte/guidcoun.html>
<http://www.doleta.gov/>
<http://www.education-world.com/counseling>
<http://www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter/>
www.myjobsearch.com
www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocecs/CRC/manualhome.html
www.bgsu.edu/offices/careers/process/process.html
www.naceweb.org/about/default.cfm
www.cacee.com/index.html
www.gradlink.edu.au/gradlink/home.asp
www.gsystems.ari.es/fadaecal
<http://www.indiaeducation.info/careershaper/register.osp>
<http://www.kerladaily.com/>
<http://www.thozilmela.com>
<http://www.keralaeverything.com>
<http://www.indiana.edu/>
<http://www.cbse.nic.in/careerguidance.pdf>
<http://www.2myjobs.com/>
<http://www.3pjobs.com/>
<http://www.a1jobindia.com/>
<http://www.alltimejobs.com/>
<http://ampersandconsulting.inida.webjump.com/>
<http://www.career1000.com/>
<http://www.careerage.com/>
<http://www.careerindia.com/>
<http://www.careersindia.com/>
<http://www.careersandbusiness.com/>
<http://www.careertips.com/>
<http://www.career.hypermart.net/>
<http://www.uoljobs.com/>
<http://www.coolavenues.com/>
<http://www.naukri.com/>
<http://www.placementindia.com/>
<http://www.rozgaar.com/>
<http://www.recruitmentindia.com/>
<http://www.winjobs.com/>

<http://www.timesjobsandcareers.com/>
<http://www.asuccessfulcareer.com/>
<http://www.assessment.com/>
http://www.studentzone.org.uk/careers/advice_services.html/
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/business/work/profiles/index.shtml/>
<http://www.averyl.com/careertype>
<http://www.wondir.com/>
http://www.info-seek.co.uk/career_advice
<http://www.wetfeet.com/>
<http://www.careeradvicenetwork.co.uk/>
<http://www.money-off.co.uk/>
<http://www.careerfair.com/>
<http://www.worktrain.gov.uk/>
<http://www.selfgrowth.com/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/general.shtml/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/cv.shtml/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/letter.shtml/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/jobs.shtml>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/interviews.shtml/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/young.shtml/>
<http://www.careerguide.net/advice/graduate.shtml/>
<http://www.all-accountancy-jobs-uk.co.uk/>
<http://www.anyworkanywhere.com/>
<http://www.aviationjobsearch.com/>
<http://www.channel4.com/brilliantcareers/>
<http://www.careersa-z.co.uk/>
<http://www.careerenergy.co.uk/>
<http://www.careersfair.com/>
<http://www.career-focus-net/>
<http://www.careerjet.co.uk/>
<http://www.cvcl.co.uk/>
<http://www.cv.index.com/>
<http://www.cvexpert.com/>
<http://www.doctorjob.com/>
<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
<http://www.reachforthesky.co.uk/>
<http://www.ucas.ac.uk/>
<http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/>
<http://www.wcn.co.uk/>
<http://www.college-scholarships.com/100college.htm>

For job search following sites are helpful

www.jobsahead.com
www.naukri.com
www.humanlinks.com
www.careerfinance.com
www.careerbuilder.com
www.monsterindia.com
www.careerspan.com
www.careerplanning.com
www.groovyjobs.com