

## **The Need of Career Counseling Awareness for Self Actualization among Students and Parents at a Secondary level of the Public schools of Karachi**

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**Abstract:** *This study that aims to identify “The Need of Career Counseling Awareness for Self Actualization among Students and Parents at Secondary Level of the Public Schools of Karachi.” The study highlights the importance of awareness about the Career Counseling programs which help to enhance the self-Actualization among the students and parents at the secondary level students. The research based on Mixed Methodology Explanatory Sequential method and for that first Quantitative data was collected and analyzed using the SPSS, one-way ANOVA for testing sample and on the basis of quantitative analysis develop semi-structured questions and analysis through the thematically approach. The results showed that Majority students and parents were not aware about the career opportunities and Also, students don’t had any goals for their career development which effects on student and parents decisions and satisfaction level.*

**Key Words:** *Guidance, Counselling, Career Counseling, Career development*

### **Introduction**

Guidance is the act of providing support, direction, and opportunities for growth (Lai-Yeung, 2014). Within the educational context, guidance aims to empower students to discover and harness their full potential, talents, and skills (Johnson et al., 2010).

Counseling, on the other hand, is a professional process in which an expert assists clients in overcoming emotional and social challenges (Landy, 2006). This involves a systematic approach to helping individuals or groups identify and resolve issues. At its core, counseling hinges on the establishment of a trust-based relationship between one or more individuals (Dickinson, 1995).

As per Borrow (1983), our world is continually evolving, becoming more intricate and laden with challenges. In this dynamic environment, the need for proper guidance and counseling across all life stages becomes increasingly apparent. Life's journey can be divided into several distinct phases, including infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Adolescence, a crucial phase, is characterized by a myriad of challenges encompassing physical transformations, mental growth, social dynamics, and emotional turbulence (Cripps & Zyromski, 2009).

Levine (2006) findings in underscore the pervasive impact of parental and societal pressures on adolescents, often resulting in feelings of unhappiness and disconnection. Extensive research, exemplified by studies conducted by Bower (2011) delves into strategies that emphasize parental engagement to not only boost academic achievement but also address the various social challenges that adolescents encounter.

The significance of parental involvement during adolescence cannot be overstated, a point emphasized (Hill and Tyson, 2009). This phase represents a pivotal juncture characterized by profound changes, with students grappling with consequential decisions, particularly those pertaining to career choices.

While teachers offer invaluable career guidance, a notable discrepancy emerges between the expectations of parents and the counsel provided by educators.

Career Counseling serves as the compass guiding individuals through a profound exploration of opportunities and diverse pathways to enhance their qualifications, abilities, skills, interests, ambitions, and future plans. It stands as the essential tool for equipping individuals with the insight required to navigate the intricate terrain of labor market demands and educational possibilities. This form of counseling acts as a bridge, facilitating individuals in crafting their future with a profound understanding drawn from a comprehensive framework encompassing psychological, physical, mental, social, emotional, and global awareness, as outlined (Super, 1957).

Furthermore, Career Counseling plays an indispensable role in propelling individuals on a transformative journey towards self-actualization, a concept rooted in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Self-actualization signifies the fulfillment of one's innate potential and the relentless pursuit of personal growth and contentment. At its core, the development of decision-making skills assumes pivotal importance within this process. Career counselors guide individuals in the assessment of their strengths, interests, and values, enabling them to make informed career choices that harmonize with their distinct attributes and aspirations. This transformative process imbues a profound sense of purpose and direction, thereby making an invaluable contribution to the odyssey of self-actualization.

Moreover, Career Counseling extends its profound influence to the realm of social behavior. As individuals delve into career options, they gain invaluable insights into the interpersonal skills vital in various professional contexts. Counselors often provide guidance on networking, effective communication, and conflict resolution, not only enhancing employability but also nurturing essential social competencies. Proficiency in social behavior emerges as a cornerstone of self-actualization, empowering individuals to forge meaningful connections and thrive in both personal and professional relationships.

Additionally, Career Counseling holds the potential to wield a profound impact on personality development. Embarking on a career journey often exposes individuals to a spectrum of challenges and opportunities necessitating personal growth and adaptation. Career counselors step in to identify and address psychological barriers and self-limiting beliefs that may impede progress. This transformative process cultivates self-awareness and resilience, ultimately fostering the development of a more robust and adaptable personality. In essence, career counseling empowers individuals to evolve and mold their personalities in harmony with their career objectives and broader life ambitions.

Career Counseling stands as the catalyst driving individuals towards self-actualization. It achieves this by enhancing decision-making process, nurturing positive social behavior, and fostering profound personality development. Through this empowering process, individuals make career choices that resonate with their innermost selves, embarking on a journey towards realizing their full potential and attaining a profound sense of fulfillment and authenticity in both their professional and personal lives.

One of the key responsibilities of schools is to actively engage parents in their child's education, a concept known as the school-parent partnership. School counselors play a crucial role in this by focusing on child development, career counseling, and fostering strong bonds between parents and the

educational institution (Walker, 2010).

The school's duty is to create opportunities for parents and students to become involved and take a keen interest in their educational activities. This can be achieved through various means, such as organizing workshops on pertinent topics like parent-to-parent forums, parent-teacher discussions, understanding a child's psychological needs, and more. Additionally, schools can encourage volunteer services from parents, leveraging their unique abilities to enrich the educational experience (Walker & Peterson, 2010).

In contemporary times, private institutions, schools, and colleges have recognized the urgent need for counseling services due to the rapid technological and scientific changes in society. Dropout rates are on the rise, and there is an increase in criminal activity among adolescents. A significant contributing factor to these challenges is the lack of awareness among both parents and teachers, resulting in a substantial societal gap.

Many students find themselves limited in their career options, primarily considering only science and commerce. This restricted choice often stems from societal pressures imposed by parents, family, friends, teachers, and schools. Consequently, students may find themselves pursuing paths they have little interest in, solely due to external pressures. This lack of choice and understanding extends to a variety of issues encompassing physical, mental, social, emotional, and cognitive areas. Faced with these difficulties, students often lack a clear sense of direction, even at the university level, leading to a sense of desperation about their future.

### **Literature Review:**

The primary aim of the investigation was to examine the discrepancies in self-actualization, life contentment, and drive among individuals involved in careers of different levels of creativity. The outcomes of the inquiry indicated that those who pursued profoundly imaginative professions reported higher contentment with their lives and were motivated by factors such as recognition, personal fulfillment, and the pursuit of the greater good.

To execute the research, a survey was utilized, which was administered via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were obligated to rate the extent of creativity in their respective careers, classifying them as completely uncreative, moderately creative, or highly creative. The survey encompassed questions derived from the Brief Index of Self-Actualization and the Satisfaction with Life scale.

Moreover, the preliminary phase of the examination, as referenced in the abstract, employed the Chi-Square test to establish a connection between working in creative domains and intrinsic motivation. Additionally, the Daily Occupational Experience Survey (DOES) was employed to scrutinize creativity across diverse professions.

The inquiry divulged that individuals who perceived their careers as highly creative reported elevated levels of life contentment. Furthermore, they were motivated by factors such as recognition, personal fulfillment, and the pursuit of the greater good.

Prior investigations have exposed discrepancies in creativity between Eastern and Western cultures. Specifically, Americans consistently outperformed Chinese individuals in terms of measures such as fluency, flexibility, originality, and divergent thinking (Cameron, 2012).

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a counseling intervention that used self-information as a means to increase students' confidence in their chosen career path. This study used a quasi-experimental non-equivalent group design with pre-test and post-test, and included a total of 94 high school students (44 male and 50 female). The experimental group consisted of her 39 students

and the control group consisted of her 55 students. Participants provided data for the study. The Self-Directed Career Exploration Inventory was used as a tool to provide self-information to students and facilitate career counseling activities. Research data were collected using the Career Plan Certainty Scale, which was used as a measure to assess students' degree of certainty in their career choices. The mean scores of students in the experimental group were compared with the mean scores of students in the control group.

Data analysis was performed using descriptive and quantitative methods using statistical analysis techniques. The significance of increases in means within experimental groups was assessed using the paired samples test, and differences in means between groups were examined using analysis of variance (ANOVA).

This study found no significant differences in mean curriculum scores between male and female students. The t-test results showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores of students' confidence in their career choices before and after the research intervention, with a p-value of 0.000. The mean values of students in the advanced group within the experimental group showed an increase and were significantly different from the mean values of students in the control group. No significant differences in mean curriculum scores were observed (Dahlan et al., 2020).

Kazi & Akhlaq (2017) purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of several factors such as parental education, professional and income on the career decision. The sample size was 432 students from two public sector in Lahore city. The data were collected through a Questionnaire and in-depth interviews. ANOVA and t test were utilized the finding out the results. The results show the parents, education and awareness, impact more on child career counselling.

Wambui (2015) purpose of the study was to find out the effect of guidance and counselling session in the school and teacher's involvement. The data was collected through a close ended questionnaire. The sample size was 555 respondents include students and teachers. The result showed that due to overload, teachers are not able to become a part of guidance and counselling.

Khan (2012) explained that the need of guidance and counselling program in school are effective and necessary. The data was collected from the Army schools and sample size was 1900 students and 126 teachers. The questionnaire as a tool was used to collect the data. The simple percentage method was used for analyzing. The result was showing that the need of counselling session for students and teachers was increasing and there is need to provide the training to the teachers in this domain.

Khattak & Qurrat-ul-Ain (2012) aim of study was to explain the need of guidance and counselling service in females' girls' secondary school in Peshawar. The data was collected by the questionnaire and survey method was used. The sample size was 20 principals and 441 students. The data was analyzed by using correlation coefficient. The result is showing that female students have complex problems and need counseling to solve the issues. Only 60 % principals have studied, guidance and counselling as a subject in their professional degree.

Nasir (2015) the study aimed to find out the strategies used to solve the problems of career counselling, selection of subjects and behavior problems. The data was collected through questionnaires. The sample size was 565 students, 417 females and 148 were male students. The data was analyzed by using SPSS version 15. The results show that the need of counseling in school increase to solve the problems. The Govt. also promote the guidance and counseling session in schools to solve the psychological issues of the students.

Nweze (2014) the study aimed to understand the issues of the students and role of guidance and counselling program. The questionnaire as a tool was used to collect data the sample size was 270 students. The data was analyzed through coefficient correlation and also found out reliability. The result shows that this is important to introduce the guidance and counselling session in the schools for the students to understand and solve the issues and problems.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The main purpose of the Need of Career Counseling Awareness for Self Actualization among Students and Parents at Secondary Level of the Public Schools of Karachi.

### *Hypothesis*

Ha : There is a significant difference between the career awareness among the parents and students career choice.

Ha : There is a significant difference between the parental support for child career and child career choice.

Ha : There is a significant difference between the parental expectation to child career and child career choice.

Ha : There is a significant difference between the social environment of child and career selection.

### *Research Methodology*

*The survey methodology was employed as the primary research approach in this study. Surveys are a valuable method for assessing large populations and evaluating their impact (Salant & Dillman, 1994). The data for this research were gathered from both students and parents in five public secondary schools located in Nazimabad town. To conduct this study, a Mixed Method Explanatory Sequential approach was chosen (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).*

*In the first phase of this research, quantitative data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire consist 30 items. In the second phase, a qualitative approach was employed, utilizing semi-structured interview questions. Data analysis involved both statistical methods, specifically the one-way ANOVA test, and thematic analysis. The results are presented in detail, and recommendations are based on the findings of this study.*

### **Data Analysis:**

In this study, the researcher opted to employ a Likert-based questionnaire as the primary data-gathering tool. The Likert scale utilized in this questionnaire typically comprises five to nine points, spanning from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" or vice versa (Uebersax, 2006). This instrument served to gauge the level of agreement among parents regarding their perceptions and opinions of career awareness programs. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items, each representing a specific variable.

Systematic data analysis procedures were conducted through various analytical methods, including the utilization of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The data were both stored and analyzed using IBM-SPSS version 23.0. Age groups, parental education levels, and outcomes related to parental perceptions of the career counseling awareness program were reported as counts with percentages. To assess the questionnaire's reliability, Cronbach's alpha was employed. The score of reliability was 0.827 that was good.

Scores for perceptions, support, expectations, and the social environment domains were presented as means difference. To examine mean differences across different parent age groups and educational

backgrounds, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed. Post hoc analysis was conducted using the Tukey Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test for multiple comparisons of means. Statistically significant results were considered those with p-values less than 0.05.

**Table 01** Mean Comparison of Outcome Scores with Age Group

	Total	25 – 35 Years	36 – 45 Years	>45 Years	
Outcomes	(n=160)	(n=74)	(n=76)	(n=10)	p-value
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	
Perceptions	2.52	2.49	2.55	2.46	0.94
Support	2.55	2.54	2.58	2.33	0.79
Expectations	2.53	2.52	2.55	2.45	0.96
Social Environment	2.49	2.50	2.49	2.36	0.21

p-value obtained using One Way ANOVA

According to the above table I the means difference scores shown that there is significant difference between parental perceptions, Support, expectations and Social Environment related to the Career Counseling According to the different age groups.

The mean comparison of the outcome scores with respect to age group, results showed the overall mean score for parental perceptions was  $2.52 \pm 1.36$ , it was  $2.49 \pm 1.38$  in age group 25-35 years old,  $2.55 \pm 1.36$  in age group 36 – 45 years old and  $2.46 \pm 1.37$  in age group more than 45-years old. The overall mean score for parental support was  $2.55 \pm 1.11$ ; it was  $2.54 \pm 1.11$  in age group 25-35 years old,  $2.58 \pm 1.10$  in age group 36 – 45 years old and  $2.33 \pm 1.28$  in age group more than 45-years old. The overall mean score for parental Expectations was  $2.53 \pm 1.02$ ; it was  $2.52 \pm 1.03$  in age group 25-35 years old,  $2.55 \pm 1.02$  in age group 36 – 45 years old and  $2.45 \pm 1.07$  in age group more than 45-years old. The overall mean score for parental Social Environment was  $2.49 \pm 0.23$ ; it was  $2.50 \pm 0.25$  in age group 25-35 years old,  $2.49 \pm 0.22$  in age group 36 – 45 years old and  $2.36 \pm 0.23$  in age group more than 45-years old. P-values more than 0.05 suggested that there were no significant mean differences in these scores with respect to age groups.

### Thematic Analysis:

#### Absents of Career Counseling Awareness program:

The lack of a Career Counseling Awareness program for secondary school students is indicative of a significant deficiency in their educational journey. These crucial years serve as a foundation for young individuals to explore their interests, abilities, and future ambitions. In the absence of appropriate career guidance, they may encounter difficulties in making well-informed decisions about their educational paths and prospective careers. This void can give rise to a variety of challenges, ranging from selecting courses that are not compatible with their goals to experiencing uncertainty regarding potential career opportunities. Furthermore, it can perpetuate social and economic disparities, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may have even fewer resources to independently seek career advice. The implementation of comprehensive career counseling programs at the secondary school level is imperative in order to empower students to make choices that align with their talents and aspirations, ultimately shaping a more gratifying and triumphant future for them.

## Parental Pressure and High expectations about future

Parental pressure encompassing the selection of a career can present both advantageous and disadvantageous aspects for students in secondary school. While parents generally have the best interests of their children in mind, their well-intentioned guidance can occasionally result in stress and bewilderment. The expectation of choosing a specific career path, often influenced by societal norms or family customs, can generate anxiety and a feeling of obligation among students. It is crucial for parents to strike a harmonious balance between providing support and granting their children the autonomy to explore their own interests and talents. Effective communication and a collaborative approach to career decisions can aid students in feeling comprehended and empowered rather than coerced. Ultimately, the objective should be to steer students towards a career that aligns with their passions and abilities, thereby ensuring a more fulfilling and prosperous future.

### **Dichotomous Situation:**

The dichotomous circumstance encircling the selection of a profession in secondary education can present a formidable challenge for students. They frequently find themselves ensnared amidst the pressure to make consequential life decisions and the ambiguity of not fully comprehending their interests and capabilities. On one hand, there exists an expectancy to opt for a specific trajectory at an early stage, occasionally driven by societal conventions or parental anticipations. On the other hand, there is a necessity for exploration and self-discovery in order to arrive at an informed decision. This can engender a stressful milieu wherein students feel compelled to make premature choices, potentially leading to career paths that do not align with their genuine passions or talents. Navigating this dichotomy necessitates a judicious approach, with educational institutions and parents offering direction and opportunities for exploration while simultaneously cultivating an awareness that career pathways often lack linearity, granting students the flexibility to adapt and evolve as they gain deeper insights into themselves and the perpetually changing job market.

### *Recommendation*

#### **1. Understanding the Responsibility of Providing Guidance at School:**

Grasping the Obligation to Offer Adequate Guidance to Parents and Students in the School Setting.

#### **2. Arranging Specialized Sessions by Grade Level:**

Organizing Grade-Specific Sessions and Welcoming Experts from Diverse Fields to Share Insights with Parents and Students.

#### **3. Leveraging External Resources for Career Counseling:**

Partnering with Private Agencies and External Organizations to Facilitate Career Counseling Sessions, Seminars, and Awareness Programs.

#### **4. Fostering an Open Discussion Environment:**

Cultivating an Appropriate Atmosphere for Open Discussions between Parents and Students.

#### **5. Promoting Awareness through Information Displays:**

Establishing an Information Display Corner for Updates and Job Opportunities to Raise Awareness among Parents and Students.

**6. Ensuring Qualified Teachers for Career Counseling:**

Ensuring that Trained Teachers are Available to Offer Assistance during Career Counseling Sessions.

**Conclusion:**

The study focused on the need of Career Counseling awareness programs for the parents and students at the secondary level of the public school of the Karachi, for this the researcher's targeted population was Nazimabad town in Karachi and the sample for the study was parents and students of secondary level of the public school. The researcher took 30% of the population for quantitative survey and the sample size according to the 30% was 160 parents of the public schools of Karachi and for qualitative the sample size was 10 students and tool was semi structured interview questions.

The study also highlighted that the need of career counseling for parents specially to understand the value of parental support in the adolescence period at the secondary level. The study also revealed that the positive parental expectation was one of the motivating factors for the students and parents and it is not possible without a knowledge of the different fields and professions in the market. Along with it, the major responsibility of parents is to identify the child's interest towards the particular profession, for that parents need career guidance and counselling sessions to understand the child needs, interest, potential, ability, learning power, skills and also know how to deal with the child in every stage of the life. Parents are responsible to provide proper environment at home for good nurturing for career development and overcome the problems and issues which relate to the social, mental, physical and emotional development of children. Prokop et al., (2007) revealed in their studies that it is very important to develop the interest of parents in child career counseling and it is only possible through the awareness programs which aim to increase information and enlighten parents about the available careers. The workshops and seminars are the best way for this purpose which help them to understand the world of work, occupations, professions, the child's interests, skills and attitudes.

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