

WHAT AND HOW VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE CAN HELP YOUTH TO GET OUT OF THE CROSSROADS OF CHOOSING A PROFESSION

M. Sc. Fatime Ziberi
International Balkan University
f.ziberi@ibu.edu.mk
North Macedonia

ABSTRACT

For many people, choosing a future profession is a challenge in itself. From an early age, individuals begin to give indications about the interests and desires for the life profession, although it often happens that they change focus and receive completely different hacks from what they previously thought. Choosing a profession is a complex process where many external and internal factors come together that motivate a person to make a vital choice.

Then what should be done so that the youth have a clearer picture of who they are and what they want to be in the future. They may have difficulty in choosing a profession and need help from competent people who will help them to make the right choice. Then the question is, to whom should they turn or to ask for help. Therefore, our intention in this paper is to answer the question what and how can vocational guidance help the individual's professional orientation? This is exactly the time when vocational guidance finds its place and position, assisting pupils and student to decide for their profession/job/career according to their abilities, interest, personal traits, e.g., choosing a job that suits them better, to work for that and improve as well. If we look on the literature, we will notice that vocational guidance and counseling as part of counseling occupies an important place starting from the lowest educational level to the highest academic levels.

Keywords: Vocational Guidance, Professional Orientation, Programs and Strategies of Vocational Guidance

1. INTRODUCTION

Although in appearance it seems that vocational guidance and professional orientation are the same thing, nevertheless we are talking about different concepts both in terms of meaning and importance. What does each of them involve and what can they do to help each other, which means what and how can vocational guidance help the individual's professional orientation? These dilemmas have been posed since ancient times by different scholars with different approaches and orientations and it is not surprising that today we have many concepts close to each other. When it comes to vocational guidance it is also associated with career guidance counseling and when it comes to career counseling it means that we are orienting the individual in professional selection or in short professional orientation. So firstly, let's see what makes the concepts similar and different.

Historically, Guidance was born out of a vocational nature in the 1919 year from Frank Parson (see Parson), when the need for vocational guidance was high and his research and work were the foundation of a discipline that would soon take on a global dimension like Guidance and extend to every aspect of life. Parson was the first one to define the Vocational Guidance as a help that is given to the youth in order to match his/her personal abilities, attributes with suitable jobs and employment opportunities and assisting them to choose an occupation, to prepare for it, making decision, and planning future profession and

improve it (Jones 1939; Gilkey 1965; Bernem, 1983; UNESCOa, 2000; Nweze & Okolie 2015; Joseph, 2016; Mimura, 2016).

In other side according to Rafajac, referring to European Commission for Education Reports (EU, 2008), professional orientation represents a set of different activities that enable individuals to identify their own interests, competencies and capabilities at different times of life, in order to make decisions on education, training and employment that will help them in development of their professional career (2019: 163).

We may offer young people enough knowledge that will help them make professional choice, or will we fail in this as Algadheeb (2015) points out and this can result in confusion, lack of student awareness of the nature of various jobs available in their societies, lack of focus and interest in many professions that they may have available.

Vocational guidance and career counseling or professional orientation has developed a conceptual shift from an approach focused exclusively on the person's work processes and professional interests to a concern for life and career paths. In this journey, her proposals have led to a global view of people, considering that the experiences linked to the world of work cannot be separated from all the other experiences that surround her in her "being" and becoming in the world (Vázquez & Martí, 2013: 5).

2. UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

For better understanding the concept of Vocational Guidance we should first look at its etiology and meaning. As Joubish et al, reports: *A vocation is a career or calling and the word is derived from the Latin **vocare**, which means "to call."* Vocational guidance means helping someone find his or her calling or at least a suitable career choice (2011: 801). Mimura (2016), as well reports that "The word 'career' means etymologically "carriage (road), track for wheeled vehicles" (pg.19).

In his attempt to clarify the concept of vocational guidance Thenmozhi (2018), states that although vocational guidance is a recent concept, it has undergone a radical change. According to him the old concept of vocational guidance was fitting an individual to a job -square peg in a square hole. But as he states this is too limited a view. He supports his thoughts saying that it is wrong to assume that men are really born to fit in various professions, a person is born for no profession at birth. We do agree with Thenmozhi when he says that individual does possess some specific ability, but that will help him to take up no one specific job but a variety of jobs, jobs of a particular group and this makes the individual further to take up some jobs, nicely after the necessary orientation. On his analysis he concludes that it is wrong to presume that once a person has joined a profession, guidance has finished its task and that success in a job depends upon not only entry but also systematic progress and adjustment during employment.

Although we mentioned earlier the definition made by Parson for vocational guidance and which is at the same time accepted by all researchers, it is worth considering some other definitions and in this case as the most appropriate perhaps, we will mention it by American National Vocational Guidance Association (ANVGA), quoted by Adoga which defines "*Vocational Guidance as the experience and advice in regard to choosing on occupation, preparing for it, entering into it and progressing in it*" (2014: 7).

Jones (1939), stated that it was inevitable that the effort to help youth in problems relating to occupations would reveal problems that were not strictly occupational bur had to be solved before a wise choice of occupations could be made. According to him among these are personal, social, and religious relationships that are essential to the attainment of a satisfactory and useful life and, therefore, important in the selection of an occupation.

According to Nweze and Okolie (2015), vocational guidance and counselling experts believe that each individual has certain abilities, interests, and personality traits and other characteristics. As they state it is the confidence of these professionals that of these characteristics are known together with their latent values and where on the job-market these values can be put into appropriate uses, the individual is more likely to become a happier person, a more effective worker and a more useful citizen.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF PROFESSION ORIENTATION

Before giving any definition about what professional orientation is, firstly let us understand what this means as a concept. To explain and clarify the concept, we will refer to Kraemmerer and his work in Professional orientation elementary school program. On this program he gives as a detailed explanation about what professional orientation is starting from clarifying them separately. Thus, accordingly the term “orientation” implies different contents of meaning. Orientation means both “situation” and “process”. Also, orientation may mean the property of an individual’s “orientation”, as well as activity or influencing someone to orientate, regardless of the manner thereof. The term “professional orientation” describes a large set of steps in the orientation process. It goes from education and occupation information to individual counselling. Also, it includes the so called “intrinsic” understanding of professional orientation in teaching, which represents a view of own personality, and “external” understanding which represents a view of the real world and occupations and extends all the way to following and instructing in the occupation selection and decision-making processes. Professional orientation also comprises the following: concrete preparation for an occupation, work experience, traineeships, measures of general vocational education, offers of concrete assistance in decision making and help that leads to successful transition into occupation and/ or opting for vocational education (2015: 8).

While talking for professional orientation Sabirova et al, (2016), including the personal orientation as well, assumes and understands it as one integrative component of person, reflecting specific training activities, the refractive index in the personal characteristics of the subject including the intentional activity of individual, specifically formed as they say in a professional activity and defining conceptual features in the implementation of activities and professional and personal development of the subject.

For Quiroga-Garza et al. (2020) professional orientation, or also called as vocational orientation as they report has been considered as a step in the choice to pursue one career.

4. THE IMPORTANCE AND FUNCTION OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN INDIVIDUALS PROFESSION ORIENTATION

From literature review for vocational guidance we may see its importance and function as well since in early years (mentioned above) what makes us understand that Vocational Guidance had a varied and evolutionary development. The fact that even the first studies and data on Guidance stem from the Vocational nature with Frank Parson's studies provides even more arguments for this. Thus, since 1954 Gellman tried to put in evidence the role of vocational guidance stating that, as others applied disciplines as well such as social work, industrial psychology, child psychology, vocational guidance needs to clarify its role as well. According to him firstly vocational guidance was concerned of the planning of careers and jobs. Later, it was concerned in job adjustment and in present is concerned in greater freedom of choice and occupation mobility.

Later on, Gilkey (1965), talks about vocational guidance in the educational system, emphasizing the importance of this field in education at all levels and thus emphasizing the importance of vocational

guidance to be part of educational programs. In the article on vocational guidance in high school, he points out that. Vocational guidance is a very important element in high school and is different depending on the context and study approach. As further reported, Guidance Counselors began to position themselves in greater numbers in the US as early as the mid-1940s and these professionals were expected to act more as "superheroes" (p. 497) than as practical educational-vocational guidance of all students. On the question of what high schools in this changing world can do to help students create vocational maturity, she suggests three aspects where vocational guidance counselor should focus more on young people which will help them adapting to the many technological changes and find themselves in the right solution. Therefore, the aspects that need to be considered and focused more are the following:

- Realistic self – concept of each student with which it would enable every pupil and student to understand themselves and the world as a whole so that they can interpret subject matter as a result of personal insights
- Habits of attendance and punctuality which help to form daily patterns for work attitudes
- Values placed upon education and personal identification of achievement of improved understandings (pg. 501).

Explaining the function of vocational guidance in the Module 1 for Guidance from UNESCO (2000a), it is said that vocational guidance was originally thought to be provided only prior to training and employment. However, it is a lifelong process for many individuals at various stages of their lives.

At such stages individuals reconsider and re-diagnose their capabilities and match them against the opportunities available. In this way, vocational guidance is aimed at helping students to make not only specific choices but also good decisions. It recognizes that flexibility, and a willingness to change, may be as critical for a student as the ability to commit oneself to a particular goal.

Also here referring to their reports we can enlist some of the main function as in follow:

1. Aid in placing a talent where is needed;
2. Strengthen the educational system by providing motivation and meaning to education;
3. Add a feeling of security to the nation, the schools, and the student, so that all face the future with confidence;
4. Provide information about occupational opportunities;
5. Encourage students in decision-making;
6. Assist students to know themselves and their environment;
7. Help students to deal with a variety of problems and to understands the problems and causes of unemployment;
8. Assist students to understand the process of making choices, and of the possible consequences of their decisions and the last but not the les one
9. Enable students to acquire a knowledge of the practical procedures needed for getting a job and progressing in it (2000: 45-47).

Answering the question about the importance of vocational guidance Joseph (2017), states that vocational guidance is important because of its multi-dimensional problems of school-to-work transition and it is believed that individuals have certain interests, abilities, personality traits and other characteristics peculiar to them. He strongly believes that if these personal attributes of individuals are detected and utilized to the fullest, it would go a long way in directing them towards a job where they are likely to perform better and useful to themselves and the society in which they live. As support for his believes and thoughts for the importance of vocational guidance, Joseph argues and points out the importance of vocational education as well saying it plays a tremendous role in equipping individuals (students) with skills and techniques necessary for the development of the students" potentials. That's for he says that is recommended that a

professionally trained guidance counsellor in the field of vocational education program that would help individuals realize their dream should be required. Summarizing about the main functions of vocational guidance he points out two main purpose, such as to help the individual make a good vocational adjustment and to facilitate the smooth functioning of the economy through the effective use of manpower.

Boglut et al (2015), explaining the importance of vocational counselling and guidance, emphasizes the importance that these have for Psychology students in particular. They based their idea on the fact that the need for career counselling is greater among students from the faculties of psychology because according to them this is a newly formed professional area, or rather, reformed after 1990. Given that over a period of several decades the faculty of psychology was abolished, it is relatively normal that the role of psychological services in society is less known to the mass of the population.

4. VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

When we talk about vocational programs we think also for activities and strategies which can be part of the overall school plan program. Based on this and referring to Bernem (1983), we can say that the program should be focused on instructions which will help pupils to see and understand:

- The social aspect (when people work together to fulfil a special task),
- The occupationally orientated aspect (to fulfil a task professionally and presumably as a life-long process),
- The technical aspect (to fulfil a task by means of technical aids according to the standard of technical organization of the firm),
- The economic (and/or economical) aspect (to fulfil a task economically, to make a profit and to earn a living). (pg. 89).

According to Muhfizaturrahmah (2017), a vocational guidance program is a form of service or assistance counselling and guidance to potential learners, participants and graduates to obtain appropriate services. As he states through vocational guidance, students can develop his potential ability to optimally utilize these capabilities to well-being, as well as participating in community life. Arguing for the importance of the programs and its benefits he says that through vocational guidance, students get a variety of information work, both types, characteristics and other information about the world of business and industry are available. Also he recommends some concrete service group vocational guidance programs, which are presented in the table below (tab. 1):

Nature of Program	Services	Activities
Informative Program	Providing employment information	Information about the world of business and industry
Training program through school programs	Soft and hard skills training	Internships, leadership training, extracurricular
Training program	Preparation for entering the workforce	Job application (fill out the job application), preparation for interviews, psychological training, deepening mastery of information technology, language training
Service program	Employment adjustment, between self-efficacy and job characteristics, circumstances, conditions and other Issues	For operational implementation and curriculum implementation through a learning process both in the classroom and practical theories

Tab. 1. Concrete service group vocational guidance programs

When we talk about services and strategies in vocational guidance, we refer to the reviews and studies that Mimura (2017) did in the analysis of the Japanese vocational and career educational program. He was more focused on two aspects; the first one on the structure of activities of the program which consist of six activities such as: career information; exploratory experience; career counseling; self-awareness; preparing for transitions and the last follow up. The second aspect is the structure on work value. Here Mimura points two dimensions: value of occupation and value of role presented as in follow in (fig. 1).

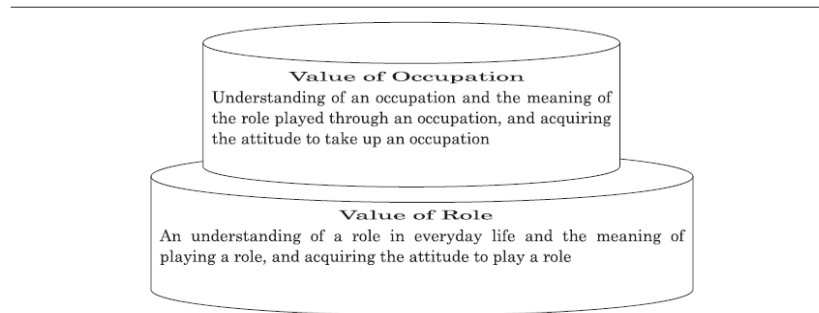


Fig. 1 Structure of work value (Takao Mimura, 2004; 2017: 31)

While talking about strategies for vocational guidance Thenmozhi (2018), emphasizing that vocational guidance is a long continuous process which starts from early education and is needed throughout the working life of the individual. He also states that is complex and that strategies are based on following principles:

1. Vocational guidance services should be based on the principle of individual differences.
2. Different strategies need to be used to cater to the individual vocational needs of students.
3. The individual needs to understand the total perspective of a vocation for which he has decided to prepare himself.
4. Vocational guidance service must fulfill the vocational needs of every student.
5. The selection of a particular vocation is not confined to a single, fixed decision, but a time extending process, involving a series of social and personal factors.
6. Occupation is to be looked at as a source of income to people and a major source of satisfying needs and optimizing aptitudes, competencies and interests (pg. 23).

5. CONCLUSION

Having in consideration that vocational guidance is a lifelong process with the aim of assisting to individual especially youth ones in making wise decisions about their professional orientation and career, we assume that is necessary and need vocational guidance to be part of overall educational program.

We will refer to Jones in saying that vocational guidance is not an easy task it's a process in which we do not just guide or counsel the individual on choosing occupation but, as Jones says "In assisting a student in the selection of an occupation, we should help him to look beyond the occupation itself and to consider what sort of a person he wants to be. He needs to think of an occupation in terms of whether it will be helpful in satisfying his basic needs and enable him to move toward his ideal self. He must consider what sort of a life he wants to live. We should help him in defining his life goal. After this is done, he is ready to consider how the occupation under consideration will fulfill his needs" (1939: 267).

If we consider that the purpose of vocational guidance is precisely to assist the individual to first know himself, his skills, interests and from the same to be able to select the profession, then it is clear that it is

precisely vocational guidance that will respond to youth requirements and questions posed at the beginning of what vocational guidance can do in individual's professional orientation.

REFERENCES

- Adoga, R. O (2014). THE CONCEPT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELING. Counseling Association of Nigeria, Enugu State Chapter (CASSON) MAIDEN EDITION. Coal City Counselling Journal. Volume 1, (1), 71-97
- Algadheeb, N. A (2015). Professional/Career Orientation, Awareness, And Their Relationship to Locus of Control. Journal of College Teaching & Learning – First Quarter. Volume 12, (1): 13-38
- Bernem, V (1983) Vocational guidance and vocational education—The German approach, The Vocational Aspect of Education, 35:92, 89-93, DOI: 10.1080/10408347308002021
- Boglut A. & Rizeanua, S & Vlad Burtâverde, V (2018). Vocational guidance for undergraduate psychology students. Psychometric properties of the questionnaire of vocational interests in psychology. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 187, 713 – 718
- Gellman, W (1954). The Role of Vocational Guidance in Counseling Youth. The University of Chicago Press. The School Review Vol. 62, No. 3, pp. 156-161
- Gilkey, M (1965). The High School Faces: Vocational Guidance. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Pp. 497-503.
- Jones, A. J (1939). Principles of Guidance. McGraw-Hill BOOK COMPANY, INC.
- Joseph, E (2017). The Importance of Vocational Guidance in Vocational Education Programs in Nigeria. SEAHI PUBLICATIONS. International Journal of Innovative Education Research 5(1):43-48.
- Joubish, M. F & Khuram, M. A & Haider, K & Fatima, S. T & Ahmed, A (2011). Research in Vocational Guidance: Some Guidelines. Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research 7 (5): 801-808, JoubishISSN 1990-9233
- Kaemmerer, E (2011). Professional orientation – career pathways. On Professional orientation. Five steps to decision on a school and occupation Professional orientation elementary school program. Issued by: Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia and Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Beograd, pg. 8-11.
- Mimura, T (2016). Vocational Guidance, Career Guidance, and Career Education phases in Japan.
- Muhfizaturrahmah, M (2017). Evaluation of vocational guidance in VHS and development's strategy. 1st International Conference on Technology and Vocational Teachers (ICTVT 2017). Atlantis Press, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, volume 102, 354-360
- Nweze, T & Okolie, U. CH (2015). Effective Vocational Guidance and Counselling Programs: Creating Opportunities for Harnessing Potentials of Street Beggars. IISTE Journal of Education and Practice. ISSN 2222-288X (Online)
- Quiroga-Garza, M. E & Florez-Marín, D. L & Cantú-Hernández, R. R & Rojas, I. E. E & Cabrera, M. V. L (2020). Effects of a vocational program on professional orientation. Helyon (6), pp. 1-4, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e03860>
- Rafajac, O (2019). Analysis of Youth Professional Orientation in the Republic of Croatia Zbornik Veleučilišta u Rijeci, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 163-183
- Sabirova, E. G & Vasyagina, N.N & Ianov, A. K (2016). The Model of the Professional and Personal Orientation of the Teacher. y iSER, International Society of Educational Research. Mathematics Education, 11(1), 291-301.
- Thenmozhi, C. (2018). "Vocational Guidance and Its Strategies." Shanlax International Journal of Education, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 20–23. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2545060>
- UNESCO (2000a). Guidance (Module1). BOTSWANA, France
- Vázquez, T. D & Martí, A. S (2013). Orientación Educativa y Profesional. Estudio de Casos. Isep Intervención Publicaciones del Instituto Superior de Estudios Psicológicos.