

Global Employability: Career Education Conference the Challenges of Globalization

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Abstract

Our surroundings are progressing by leaps and bounds and time has arrived when the meritocratic society accepts people with right qualification and right skills. The ancient time is over that accounted a degree for a high profile job. In the modern time, the transparency in job recruitment is recognizable. Challenges and competition are part of our lives now. Needs are developed to comprehend our skills, abilities [1] and encounters to save us from aimlessly changing of job in future. The state curricula released by Higher Education Commission are reviewed to identify the need, importance and application of career education through curricula. The current essay is going to address the grey scenarios of education related to global employability in Pakistan due to the lack of career education in curricula; and interventions to overcome those deficiencies.

Keywords: Global Employability; Globalization; Career Education; Career Counseling; Curricula; Theory and Practice

Introduction

Careers have great importance in our lives [2]. Researches have proved that careers are essential in developing social status and individual confidence in competitive world. Redesigning work will lead to greater decision making, more productivity and better career making [3]. We spend maximum time in building our career, and sooner it becomes our identity, right career, right career choice guidance can lead to right identity development (Saskia, 2013).

Burk (2014) says, "Aim of education is to produce economically employable citizens" which means education should help us in dealing with transitions between school and work. According to Australian Education Council "Career education is concerned with the progress of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned platform of learning proficiencies, which will assist students to make informed decisions about school and post-school options and enable effective participation in working life" [4]. Career education in curriculum at university level is very important from different perspectives. It can facilitate learner to familiarize with domain of work, develop and plan their knowledge, skills and manage their career projections. Better self-understanding and awareness of learner through curriculum about career, its nature and demands can permit individuals to develop his career, society and country at the same time (A. Zahid, Z. Alam, A. Muhammad, personal communication, November 22, 2014).

In Pakistan, after completing intermediate, mostly learners don't know where to go, what to do, and aimlessly they do graduation without any specialization (N.J. Jahan, personal communication, Nov 11, 2014). This leads to deprived living standards and poor contribution to society and may be give birth to crime in society like terrorism. Career education facilitates individuals to think about his interest and abilities related to work demand and transitions between school and work. It should start after higher secondary level (Sewani, 2014), enabling learners to select an educational degree, which would help them out to have a good job opportunity. The core objective of career education is to enable learner to set a goal, search right educational degrees, trainings and skills to achieve that particular goal. Moreover it will help to know about nature of jobs, educational requirements, salary, working conditions, fringe benefits, promotion chances, future prospectus, and right dimension to put our efforts.

It's the fruit of globalization that we all stand shoulder to shoulder irrespective of gender. This leads to an outstanding interaction and awareness about the endeavors of the world. Due to globalization demand of low skilled labor has been reduced to highly educated and skilled labor. Now standards have been increased to international dregs. We can't restrict ourselves to regional culture, languages, behaviors and challenges because now we have to deal with foreign entrustments [5].

Pakistan being third world country has unexpectedly low performance in major fields of life, and education is one of them. First world countries are developed because they have literate societies and skilled labor force (Ricento and Wiley, 2003). Global Competitiveness Report (2014 - 2015) says, Pakistanis fronting many socio-political issues, highly effecting educational performances. Its Competitiveness is more penalized by inflexibilities and inefficiencies of its labor market. Men and women work together to elevate the labor market. According to technological readiness index, Pakistan is among the fifth lowest rate countries because of less females' participation to labor market than developed countries. Education can be a major reason for non-participation. So, education related to work for men and women can play significant role in development of a country (The Express Tribune, 4th September, 2014).

Career education in curriculum can contribute to the development of country. Although it's a myth to reform entire education system over the night [6] but Government, political leaders and civil societies being stakeholders can reform education in a systemic manner, struggling with the challenge of implementation of education. Reformation of education involves institutions, teachers, students and curriculum. According to the Global Competitive Report (2014 - 2015) tertiary level education has improved as compared to previous years due to involvement of teachers [7]. It means that at higher educational level teacher and knowledge related to careers can make a magical combo influencing the productivity of students in labor market.

In Pakistan, curriculum at university level is designed by Higher Education Commission for all the universities and holds the responsibility of uniformity among curricula taught at every university. It is designed by the involvement of authorities including head of departments from different universities and revised after every three years on the basis of time and not need. At university level career education is a major concern. Specific curriculum containing suggestions from industry should be taught which can help learner to reproduce knowledge in labor market. But it is actually not happening due to limited resources and time. Moreover, limited combination of subjects and job requirements drag this aim away. Pakistan, being developing country is facing many broader issues of low economy, downsizing, poverty, workerless factories, lack of wellness and unemployment. In order to deal with these broader issues career education can play a significant role if addressed in curriculum properly (R.S. Sahukat, personal communication, September 9, 2014).

Methodology

To study the prints of career education in curricula the curricula of Psychology and electrical engineering was reviewed released by HEC (2008 - 2009). These two curricula were reviewed because there are less industrial job positions for psychology and electrical engineering scholars. It was found that minimum part of the curriculum of psychology contains traces of career education and rest is based on theory. The students encounter challenge when they are not prepared for the market and only minimum of the curricula cannot prepare them for the market. The confusion of knowledge and labor skills results in collapse of the students in the market. Whereas, the best practice would be to relate the knowledge of theory with that of market trends. So that students can straightforwardly set them with the developing labor market. This is the reason that psychology students are less prolific in industry (U. Shahbaz, Personal Communication, November 21, 2014).

Career education in engineering curriculum has been addressed up to the level that students are able to perform in the labor market. Again a question raised that in Pakistan males select engineering more than females due to the fact that females have to perform the soft job likes baby births etc. But if the male of the family is sitting unemployed the whole family is in turbulence. So, is career education more addressed in engineering curriculum for promoting employment by males than females? Answer to this question would be "No". Curricu-

lum contains aspects of engineering related to daily life, more applicable in nature and more practiced that is why its knowledge is more linked with skills required for industry [8]. Same addition is required for psychology curriculum for modification and linked with day to day practice. I believe through this action psychology students can gain more skills required by the job market.

Theories of Career Education

Similarly career development theories stress upon career education from the primary level of education, so that students can align themselves with the preferred career choice. According to Super's (1980) theory of life span, individual at his growth stage (0 - 14) learns the most basic aspects of life and completes the secondary education till the age of 14. Relating students with career education knowledge and that of selected career choice may facilitate in selecting subject through informed decision making at higher secondary level. This will in turn help the student at university level and finally in work industry.

Likewise, Holland theory of six personality codes suggests that students can reproduce in labor market if they struggle to find job and working environment matching to their personality. For example an engineer with investigative or realistic personality would be more productive in industry than others, but a person with social personality and accounting subject that was taken because of family of any other pressure would lead to disaster. As the theory articulates that accounting is fit for individuals with conventional personality type. It can be notified from above discussion that career education can help in selection of right subject according to the personality type which is going to affect the whole life of an individual [9].

National Educational Policy (2013) is an effective and operative policy in Pakistan. It has addressed career education in curricula at all educational levels for the progression of healthy citizens in and of Pakistan. Among all goals of this policy one is effective transition of students to labor market at higher education level. It means policy suggests that such courses should be pooled and taught which can help students to reproduce efficiently in industry. Likewise they can make work to work transition too. In the light of these goals there is need of more adequate introduction of career education in curriculum.

Results

Role of Higher education institutes in economic development

Higher education institutions play a key role in securing economic well-being of a country in twenty-first century. As it continue helping students to fulfill their personal, academic, vocational and professional potentials. Alternatively, the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers commerce (RSA) defined capability as a holistic concept of education and training both. The capable graduate will be an active operator in real life and employment both. It give rise to development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences, which will assist students to make informed decisions about effective participation in working life (Patton, 2005).

Working life must take interpretation of global economic and technological change. On the basis of changing values and media, people brought changes among families, neighborhood and acquaintances. Therefore, dynamics are changing both locally and globally. Government has acknowledged this change by suggesting that social attachments, feelings and strong conflicting pressures occurring in the early life of individuals must be accounted along with labor economy. Likewise learner must be seen in social world with decisions and problems in broader context pointing towards the importance of values and responsibilities. This all has important repercussions for the future of careers education through curriculum at universities [10].

The uplift in economy has increased the demand of thought at work and reduced the demand of muscle. Therefore, education and training are increasingly aimed at improving our ability to think at work and about work, and this is for what careers education through curriculum at university is for. This process of being able to link gradient of opportunities to gradient of interests and skills are considered as bases for choice. DOTS provide an opportunity for selecting this choice [11].

DOTS (Decision making, Opportunities, Transitions and Self-awareness) analysis facilitates learners by enabling them to make informed decisions with effective transitions. Alternatively, it allows them to invoke self-awareness and utilize opportunities of the world of work. It is being an efficient tool sharpening learning aims of students. It represents early learning that formulates the ground for new learning and learning assimilated over the time. Along with this, critically understanding of work, progressive learning, depth of working life, how things change and social cohesion are the other aspects that govern needs of learners in labor market [12].

Education about careers has its roots in primary and secondary level along with higher educational level i.e. University. In Pakistan in few private educational organizations it has been introduced at primary level in curriculum and textbooks and results were obvious as they were expected. Students start aligning themselves with the respective career they want to opt in future. Theory states that at that particular age learner develops their career choices on the basis of their interests and likes. As they develop career choice, they start gathering nitty-gritty information related to that career. This process of search, hunt and exploration lead them to identify in depth knowledge about the career and their personality starts developing according to the requirement of the career.

At secondary and higher level students are transiting from growth phase to the phase of exploration. At this stage students try to implement the acquired knowledge, relatively if we say that the gained knowledge intrinsically and extrinsically motivates the student to apply in market than I would not be wrong. They move to industry for work and do first work of their lives through gained knowledge given at primary, secondary and higher secondary level. A good body of research has shown the importance of career education provided at childhood or primary level and leading to higher education level results in more productive individuals than others [13].

Discussion

Concentrating on educational aspects for linking students with labor market is of significant importance. One of the primary goals of higher education is an effective transition of student from academia to work industry. Likewise successful transition can be categorized as success of educational system and vice versa. In reality, due to enormous influencing factors in education system it is not that simple in Pakistan. For example according to one survey about one of the renowned psychology departments of Pakistan, the ratio of successful transition of graduate students to industry was only 5% and rest of the 95% became part of unemployed community (N.K. Rauf, personal communication, October 9, 2014). Now we are facing the huge challenge of lack of psychology practicing in Pakistan. Here the question arises that if one subject is not practiced than why it is being educated to a large number of students. Linking to it in Karachi and Lahore (the biggest cities of Pakistan) there are big huge campuses of Psychology whose transition ratio of students to work market is only 4% to 5% approximately (K.L. Luqman, personal communication, December 9, 2014). There is a strong need of research to be done on students for not participating in work industry. Where as in international market the ratio of students successfully transiting to labor market is 92% and rest of the 8% are found involved in non-educational activities. They are transiting to labor market from school effectively because career education has been introduced to them earlier at the time establishing their likes and exploring the world around them [14].

According to Educational Act 1979 and Rhodesia's education system in Zimbabwe higher education should be related to attainment of complete industrious employment. Likewise, education and employment issues should be solved by providing "education for employment". This can be elaborated as education at higher level should be provided exactly in accordance with the requirements of the employment. In the light of Educational Act 1979, it can be restated that in Pakistan among all other issues for improving education for employment or career education one basic issue i.e. teacher training was high beamed. Trained teachers play a unique and significant role in developing learner's skills for employment than others. They have the capability to enable and student for efficient transition from schools to work, hence cultivating employability [15]. The more students will be employed, the more industry will grow leading to the development of country.

Moreover, it has been observed huge discrepancies in trends of employability in labor market. If in the first year industry is hiring fresh graduates and soon after this, industry will be in need of 5 - 10 year experienced candidate. Due to this labor market policy universities

are under great pressure to produce employable graduates. For this reason one of the top ranked universities of Pakistan had started industrial seminars by inviting the CEO's of the industry to their institution. Even then arguments exist regarding what constitutes employability and what attributes are required to foster employability in higher education. Rapidly changing information industry and knowledge intensive economy, employability requires something more than generic skills by graduate employers. Instead of this, for optimum economic outcomes, graduates must be capable of managing career building process by directing world of work. For enhancing employability and life long career management the desirable attributes, self-management and career building skills are required [16].

Harvey (2010) believes that there are certain attributes that students need for applying their knowledge in organizations. These attributes can be the generic skills or working skills required by the industry. Such attributes will combine to form a huge concept called employability. Employability is called as the asset of an employee, referring to his capability for maintaining and attaining employment. The goal of career education is to serve the student with skills of this asset. It has been found that flexible organizations require flexible and progressively empowering employee. Moreover, economic competition cannot be answered by only employability but skilled based employability.

One of the surveys done in England highlighted the importance of employability skills through teaching and graduate's prospects about labor market. According to this study employability skills can be meritoriously develop within a classroom. Based on this conception, teachers were engaged to teach employability skills. However, despite the best efforts of the department to enhance employability, the limitations with this schema produced mixed outcomes. Instead, due to the significance of employable graduates, it was argued to utilize resources (i.e. employable graduates) to increase and improve employment-based training with in a class for students. This program supported graduates in their transitional phase to employment phase [17].

In Australia, tertiary education system considered to be a milestone for the graduates performing and not performing in the labor market. Researchers and teachers tried to assess the effect of different kinds of employability skills on graduate student's performance in labor market. It was found that employer's involvement in degree course and structured work experience helped students to earn jobs of graduate level and perform well in labor market and earn living for them. Moreover, departmental engrossment was found significant too for student's involvement in labor market (Mason, Williams, and Cranmer, 2009). It can be seen that in Pakistan if we want to practice Australia's educational strategy for imparting employability skills among students then not only teacher, class and employer are involved but inclination of particular department for developing these skills is significant too.

In United Kingdom, academic credentials except degree are considered to be significant for employment of students in labor market. Students believe that there is progressively need of adding treasured courses, training and experiences associated with world of work to the academic credentials which can benefit them in labor market. They believe that these credentials are the investments which help them to develop employability skills profiting them in industry. Likewise, they perceive labor market to be competitive for graduate students and that is why they understand the role of educational credentials in relation to their future employability. The more experience graduate possess related to work the more he is fruitful in labor market [18].

Conclusion

It can be extracted from the above discussion that career education is highly significant at university level. It has been comprehended that people from first world countries are practicing career education in their curricula which lead to effective transition of student to work industry and it becomes one of the reasons of development of these countries. Being a scholar of Career Education in Curriculum I believe that bringing it in curriculum and addressing the requirements of students related to job market trends is a magical relationship for preparing students for employment. Meanwhile, developing aptitude of student for labor market is not only the purpose of serving the organization and earning a good living but also it can be one of the essential steps towards the development of country.

Hence, it can be stated that career education in curriculum should constitute a specific part. Likewise, trained teachers and departmental involvement for efficient change of student from education to work would be encouraged. Curriculum should be modified on the basis of need of student and industry most importantly governing the sudden shifts in work industry. The last three afore narrated ideas need to be implemented at university level in all educational system leading to a Pakistan with healthy citizen, who are capable of choosing and being chosen by the careers [19].

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