

Career Development and Job Placement Services in Higher Education Institution

*Mariza P. Manlagaylay*¹
ORCID 0000-0002-7542-3679

*Lora E. Añar*¹
ORCID 0000-0002-9020-9777

Abstract

Career and job placement services are vital services that higher education institutions provide for their students. These services lead to the institutions' contribution to society's human capital development by facilitating the development of employability competencies of its students. The study described the implementation of career development and job placement services of a state university in the Province of Bukidnon particularly the status of its performance and level of effectiveness and based on this information an intervention program to strengthen the services was proposed. A descriptive-qualitative research design using the annual accomplishment reports of the activities conducted for the past three years, 2017-2019, was utilized including a researcher-made questionnaire administered online through a Google form. Findings revealed that the career development and job placement services were implemented in the institution. The students were able to get career information, exploration, and direct experiences for job searching and job interview. They could reflect and make critical decisions on the career paths to take, considering their context and the labor demands. The students find the services very effective that calls for the sustainability of implementing the services in various platforms and formats.

Keywords: Career development, job placement services, higher education, career planning, integrative contextual model

Career development and job placement are essential services that prepare graduating on-the-job-training students (OJT) for work or employment. The tools and knowledge gained by the young people allow them to have a realistic plan for their future. Specifically, career development assists students in making significant decisions in life, while job placement offers help to students in their job seeking which are provided by educational institutions, various employment agencies, and recruiters (McQuerry, 2018). Career

and job placement is one of the primary services of the guidance unit that is a mandate of higher education institutions based on CMO 9, s 2013.

Various characteristics that define a career include prosperity, enhancing a number of positive traits and characters, such as discipline, patience, creativity, and perseverance. According to Schneider and Stevenson (1999) as cited by Hughes and Carp (2004), career development is vitally important for today's youth who are more than "motivated but directionless." Gaining

¹ Bukidnon State University

knowledge and improving skills that will help an individual establish a career plan is an ongoing process (Erskine-Sacky, 2013). A study conducted by Wright, Murdock, and Jenkins-Guarnieri (2013) investigates the career development of college students about their decisions based on theoretical lens of social cognitive career theory (SCCT). The results show that college self-efficacy may be an essential cognitive variable in college students' persistence, decisions, and academic success, offering additional information about their early career development. Oliver and Spokane (1988) compared other possible outcomes such as career-related knowledge or career-related self-concept development and posits that career interventions have the most impact on the development of career decision-making skills.

One of the core functions of the Guidance Unit in all higher education institutions (HEIs) is to conduct career development and job fair activities for the students. It is usually done at least a month before the students' graduation. In particular, the job hiring activity is in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Public Employment Service Office (PESO) inviting various companies to participate in the activity. It is established to assist students and alumni in search of career and job employment. The activity applies to all bona fide graduating students enrolled in school for the current school year, alumni, and external applicants.

Specifically, for students' career development, various activities are done to ensure their readiness in the job interview, job application, resume and letter writing, and practice interview, among others. It also includes seminars that enhance students' personality traits and soft skills facilitated by the guidance counselors. For job placement,

the annual job fair is in coordination with the various companies, local, regional, national, and foreign companies. It provides individuals the access to meet multiple employers at a time. During the job fair, the applicants follow steps that include pre-registration, preparation of needed documents, and the actual interview of participating companies/employers.

Previous reports made by the PESO in March 2019 annual job fair of the university revealed that 63 applicants were hired on the spot out of 831, which is only 7.58% of the total job applicants interviewed for employment. Despite the activities mentioned above, the number of applicants who were employed or hired on the spot is seemingly insignificant. This report served as a basis to look into the effectiveness of services provided for the students. After all, it is the goal of the HEIs to improve the skills and abilities of the students and help them achieve their goals through various activities.

Hence, the study aimed to describe the implementation status of career and job placement services in the past three years, carried out by the Guidance Unit. The study also attempted to look into the effectiveness of career development and job placement services of the University. The output of the study is an intervention program.

The Framework of the Study

The study is anchored on the integrative contextual model (ICM) of career development that contends that both age and situations are essential in career development of the youth. In preparing for career, they must have a sense of creativity and develop a proactive management as they face significant challenges in life (Lapan, 2004). Super, Savickas and Super (1996) also posited that the schools need to provide experiences where youth can learn

sets of skills and motivational styles and approaches. Such experiences will guide them to establish satisfying life structures all throughout their lifespans.

Career development programs acknowledge the needs of students to create more flexible, adaptive, and engaging approaches to their current situations and potential future career selves, as depicted in Figure 1. (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The ICM denotes the establishment of career development responsibilities within the services of the institutions. These include: *forming a vocational identity; learning effective social, prosocial, and job ready skills; and developing a better awareness of oneself, the world of work, and one's fit in the world of work.* Furthermore, the model incorporates objectives related to career decision-making preparation, crystallizing personally valued professional interests, and empowering all students to succeed academically and become self-regulated learners. Career development motivations and motivational approaches should also be taught and provided to students.

Figure 1

Framework of the Study Showing the Processes Involved in Career Development and Job Placement Services



Review of Literature

Formal and informal experiences that start from childhood to adulthood develop one's interests, values, talents, and skills. It signifies a process in career development that encloses much of the life span (Lent & Brown, 2013). The process progresses into one's career behavior, such that it influences an individual's career choices and making decisions, adjustment to work, and even retirement. Career development is dynamic and has an ever-changing nature affecting an individual's career or work behavior.

Career and job placement services aid students in career development, also known as vocational guidance. The primary purpose of the service is to assist or process clients or counselees' career development (Okumo, n.d.). With this definition, it encompasses various career counseling situations that include helping students be aware of the different occupations available for exploration; interpreting occupational interest/inventory to students; assists them in decision-making; help them apply for a course in a university or technical vocation; and role playing a job interview with a counselee in preparation for the actual job interview.

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) has set a guide for school counseling programs, a national standard for career development. The programs lay the foundation for skills acquisition, abilities and attitudes, and knowledge that enable students to obtain a successful change from school or formal education to the workplace and from one job to another across the life span.

Ntganda (2001) explained that various Universities and colleges established offices primarily for career planning and placement services. The offices are created to advice students in making decisions about their

vocational goals and help these graduates look for secure employment in their specific field of study. However, a problem still exists and needs to be addressed despite good intentions and efforts made by these colleges in establishing such office. The impact of career planning and placement services are seemingly not clearly understood by potential graduates. Hence, the need for research to explore and investigate how students perceive the services provided by this office.

Most colleges and universities have career planning and placement offices. The placement of students is no longer taken as part of the University's career development program. It is now committed to provide the service even after graduation. In fact, the placement event is viewed as the end or final process of career development bringing the student to the activity called placement. It is a culminating activity of career development of students in a college or a university. The College Placement Council (1991) explained that the combination of career-planning activities and the job-search activities of the placement office provides a holistic and developmental perspective of the career development of students. It is suggested that career development plays a vital role among many students in their pursuit of a course of study.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (2015) posited that guidance activities that promote lifelong learning have an effective response to issues that affect groups, individuals, and enterprises. The learning activities help improve the success of individuals at all stages. It is also one of the most influential labor market provisions for ensuring long-term career outcomes. The policy strategies in lifelong learning and employment are greatly supported by the center while translating them into direct support for

citizens. Given a well-coordinated lifelong guidance system, it generates a systematic connection of education, employability support, training, and most importantly, clarity. Accordingly, guidance is a positive response to both social and economic instability; it is the science and practice of adaptability.

The high school, undergraduate, and graduate faculty was urged by National Conference on Graduate Education in Psychology (American Psychologist, 1987) to provide students with education necessary for employment outside the University. Preparing students for work is not a question for many educators. It is because program and curriculum initiatives, academic departments, student affairs professionals, and faculty have helped answer this question. Hardesty (1991) cited that undergraduate career development are offered for college credit while career-planning interventions are integrated into traditional courses (Quinn & Lewis, 1989). The faculty advise students about career-oriented issues (Matthews & Ware, 1988) and the student affairs on career-development programs, such as individual counseling and career workshops (Bjorkquist, 1987).

A group of researchers in Canada researched career needs and perceptions of the effectiveness of career development services within high schools focusing on grade 12 students. Bloxom, Bernes et al. (2008) reported that significant challenges due to changing social and economic conditions were encountered by high school students engaging in career-decision making. The needs assessment of students provides unique insights on the effectiveness of high school career programs as perceived by the students. Results showed that grade 12 students value resources that support significant changes or transitions, they

have passion for careers, and report broad range of occupational choices. However, students' perception on availability of career development resources is not very effective.

Chu, Hsieh, and Chang (2007) investigated the relationships between learning satisfaction of adult learners in master's programs at a university, their career development and learning motivation. The results of the study revealed that both the learners' learning motivations and satisfaction are affected by some demographics. Moreover, there is a relationship between students' learning motivations and learning satisfaction.

According to Dunbar (2019), a well-functioning career guidance services for young people and adults can benefit from other components of TVET thus helping them achieve Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Both the targets 8.5 and 8.6 call for full and productive employment and decent work for all genders, as well as a significant reduction in the proportion of young people unemployed. However, decent work needs more than equal access to education, enhanced curriculum, and fairer governance. The obstacles are often insurmountable for people from poor communities. A lack of social capital hinders them from getting their way. Thus, challenging recruitment practices such as having family connections are more preferred than educational qualifications or aptitude. Other practices such as information on job vacancies and selection criteria are kept and preserved for the well-informed middle classes.

Career guidance is most beneficial as it shortens the time from school exit to employment. These days with the fast-changing society, full of uncertainties, and competitive labor market, employers and workers not only change jobs but

also career paths more than once in their working lives. In order to remain resilient during economic downturns leading to frequent movement between education and employment and between jobs, periods of retraining or up-skilling are increasingly necessary. Hence, access to career guidance is essential for workers of all ages to react positively to labor market demands and trends thus, reducing periods of unemployment.

Objectives of the study

The study focused on career development and job placement services. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. describe the implementation status of career and job placement services in the past three years;
2. determine the level of effectiveness of career and job placement services; and,
3. develop an intervention program to strengthen the services.

Methodology

Research Design and Method

The study utilized a mixed method of research design particularly the explanatory sequential approach. The researchers collected quantitative data in the first phase, analyzed the results, and then built on them in the second qualitative phase using a variety of research methods. The quantitative data were gathered through document analysis using the annual accomplishment reports of the activities conducted in the last three years, 2017-2019. The annual reports on career and job placement were used to describe the status of implementation of career and job placement services, while descriptive

analysis was used to determine the level of effectiveness of career and job placement services by presenting the mean and standard deviation. The data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire administered online through a Google form. Open-ended questions were asked in the Google form. Online interview was done to verify the answers. The qualitative data explained the quantitative results in greater depth.

Participants of the Study

The participants were the graduating college students of a state university on-the-job-training students (OJT), and alumni. Due to the limitations in selecting the participants amidst the pandemic, quota sampling was utilized. In Google form, apart from the questionnaire, a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and a statement of confidentiality were uploaded. Once they agreed, they were asked to answer the items following the instructions provided. Finally, the data were then encoded and analyzed.

Table 1

Participants' Profile in Terms of Employment, Age, and Sex

Employment	%	Sex	%	Age	%
Government	51%	Male	38%	18-25	84%
Private	32%	Female	62%	26-29	9%
Others	17%			30-33	3%
				34-37	3%
				38-41	
				42-45	1%
Total	100%		100%		100%

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the participants. Most of them who responded were employed in government agencies, some in private agencies,

while others are employed but neither in government nor private organizations. The participants' ages ranged from 18-43 years old, where 62% were females and 38% were males.

The Instrument

The annual accomplishment reports and evaluation instruments of the University Guidance Center were utilized to describe the status of implementation, focusing on the various career development and job placement services provided to the students over the past three years. Using a four-point Likert scale, the evaluation instrument consisted of 14-item statements categorized into the following: conduct of the activity, the organizer/facilitator, the venue, and the overall evaluation of the activity.

Scale	Range	Qualifying Description	Qualifying Statement
4	3.26-3.25	Strongly Agree	The services were highly implemented
3	2.51-3.25	Agree	The services were implemented
2	1.76-2.50	Disagree	The services were less implemented
1	1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree	The services were not implemented

A researcher-made questionnaire was also developed to look into the effectiveness of career development and job placement activities. The developed questionnaire underwent content and face validity. A panel of three experts reviewed, evaluated, and suggested appropriate item statements. Consequently, the questionnaire was enhanced and improved based on the experts' comments and suggestions. As a result, the questionnaire focused on the students' skills, abilities, and experiences on career development and job placement services, respectively.

The instrument consisted of 25-item statements. It required the participants

to provide basic information such as name (optional), age, sex, course and year graduated, and job/employment. Further, it also asked the participants to rate the effectiveness of the various activities conducted using a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 'very much effective' and 'not effective.' A comment section was also given in the questionnaire. Below is the scale description of the questionnaire.

Scale	Range	Qualifying Description	Qualifying Statement
5	4.21-5.00	Very much effective	The activities helped me to a very great extent
4	3.41-4.20	Very effective	The activities helped me to a great extent.
3	2.61-3.40	Effective	The activities helped me to a moderate extent.
2	1.81-2.60	Less effective	The activities helped me to a lesser extent
1	1.00-1.81	Not effective	The activities did not help me at all

Moreover, the researchers made use of two-item writers for the development of the researcher-made questionnaire that measured the effectiveness of the activity. Accordingly, this reduced potential subjectivity and bias in constructing the instrument (Roid & Wendler, 1983). The developed item statements aligned with the framework, the integrative contextual model (ICM) of career development.

Data Gathering Procedure

Using the researcher - made questionnaire converted in Google form, the participants were provided the link to answer the form. A specific direction was given where they were asked to provide the basic information. Another instruction was given regarding the statements found in the questionnaire.

Limitations of the Study

The study had limitations regarding data gathering, administration of the questionnaire, and the constitution of the

participants. The researchers intended to gather the data using focus group discussion (FGD) and interviews. The researchers also planned to administer the questionnaire face-to-face. However, due to the pandemic, the desired number of participants was not achieved. With this limitation, future researchers may consider FGDs and individual interviews. Future researchers may also develop a questionnaire for the participating agencies to have a varied and broader range of responses from other possible participants.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers gave due consideration to the conduct of the study since it involved human participation. Before the conduct of the study, it sought the approval of the Ethics Board of the University. Specifically, the study was reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) using the Protocol Assessment Form. Emphasis was focused on participants' anonymity. They were assured that any information that identified them would not be revealed in the study. Their participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw should they feel any discomfort with no consequence. Their informed consent was also sought before they responded to the instrument. Since the administration of the tool was conducted online, the participants' consent form was also attached to signify that they agreed to participate in the study. The issue of confidentiality was also emphasized in the consent form and how the participants could benefit from the study.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study were divided into three parts. The first part was on the status of implementation of career and job placement services of the institution in the

past three years. The second was on the level of effectiveness of the career and job placement services. Lastly, the intervention program that would help strengthen the career and job placement services of the University was created.

The Status of Implementation of Career and Job Placement Services.

The implementation status of the career and job placement services of the university were taken from the annual reports and evaluations of the participants for the last three years. All vital information and facts from these documents were studied and analyzed.

One of the career and job placement services provided by the university is the yearly job fair. This activity is in partnership with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Public Employment Service Office (PESO). Various employers from local, national, and international agencies gathered together in one venue to interview applicants for vacant positions in their respective

organizations. The job fair was conducted for the graduating students, alumni, and other individuals looking for jobs.

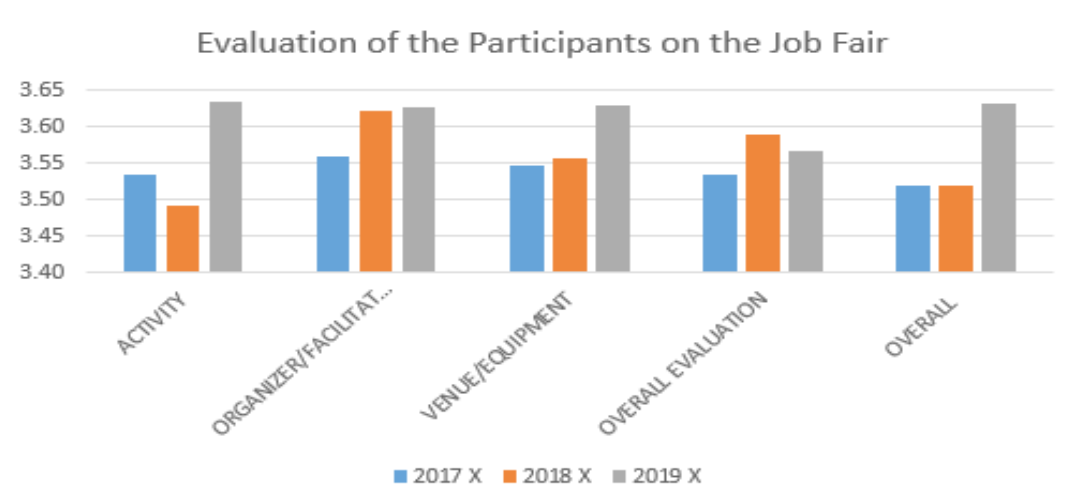
Based on the documents, the job fair as an undertaking was found to be very well implemented, as manifested in the increased presence of various employers and job applicants in the past three years. There is an increase in the participation of employers and job applicants every year.

In 2017, 32 employers participated in the job fair. They were all from local private industries. There were 441 job applicants who joined the job fair. Among these applicants, 157 job seekers were outside the university (external stakeholders), while 284 applicants were graduating students of the institution.

There was an improvement in participation in 2018. Thirty-six (36) employers: 28 local and eight overseas agencies took part in the interview of participants for the job fair. However, there was a decrease in the number of job applicants. There were 255 job applicants present at the job fair. Among

Figure 2

Evaluation of Participants on the Job Fair



Legend: 3.26-4.00 Strongly Agree 1.76-2.50 Disagree
 2.51-3.25 Agree 1.00-1.75 Strongly Disagree

the job applicants, 144 were graduating students, 52 were alumni, and 59 were external stakeholders. Moreover, in 2019, there were 50 employers who joined the year's job fair; 43 local and 7 overseas employment agencies. There were 358 job seekers present at the job fair: 220 alumni and external job applicants, 66 graduating students, and 72 SHS graduating students.

The increased number of employers was brought about by the preparations made by the organizing committee, the University Guidance Center, in partnership with DOLE and PESO. Various platforms for dissemination were done. Announcing the job fair activity a month before its implementation through dXBU 104.5, posting the information in strategic places, and sending emails to the employers, DOLE, POEA, and PESO led to having well-participated job fair undertakings.

Figure 2 shows the graphical results of the participants' evaluations of the job fair's implementation during the last three years. The participants in the activity, organizers and facilitators, site and equipment used, and participants' overall experience of the activity all show a very good trend. There was also an increase in the evaluation in the last three years.

The details of the assessment of the participants are found in Table 2. Majority of the participants strongly agreed with the statements of the evaluation on the activity, organizing committee, venue, and their overall feedback of the activity. It means that they found the job fair very well implemented.

Participants *strongly agreed* that the number of employers who attended the job fair was sufficient. It had given them a career head start and had provided them with ideas on what and how to prepare in applying for a job. The employers' interview provided the job applicants with the direct

experience of using their communication skills and job-seeking skills.

Some participants wished to extend the job fair to another day. This was the only indicator that was rated *agreed* in two years. But the participants in 2019 found it sufficient to have the undertaking in one day. The feedback might be attributed to the number of employers and job seekers attending the activity. Some might not have enough time to do job hunting and be interviewed by all the employers of their choice.

Another factor that made the job fair well-implemented was the job fair organizers and facilitators. Participants found them very courteous and accommodating. They were well-organized and well prepared for the activity. The announcements and instructions were disseminated during the opening program. Other announcements were also posted on the information board of the venue.

The chairs and tables were also found to be well arranged and sufficient. The venue at the University Gymnasium in 2017 and 2019, and the Auditorium in 2018 were adequate for the activity. The arrangements of tables and chairs were well situated so that the employers and job applicants were seated comfortably for the job interview.

Job fair is an effective activity for job placement service. It gives an avenue for employers and job applicants to come together for an interview. It provides an opportunity for graduating students and job seekers to choose the kind of careers or jobs they intend to take while reflecting on their abilities and competencies and the employers' requirements and expectations.

Career development and career planning seminars as part of the career guidance services were also conducted for the students in the different colleges of the University. In 2018, the career guidance

Table 2

Evaluation of the Participants on the Job Fair

Statements	2017			2018			2019		
	x	sd	qd	x	sd	qd	x	sd	qd
ACTIVITY									
1.) A one-day job fair was adequate.	3.22	0.64	A	3.28	0.69	A	3.53	0.68	SA
2.) The number of employers that attended was sufficient.	3.33	0.56	SA	3.56	0.55	SA	3.37	0.67	SA
3.) The activity gave me a career head start.	3.49	0.55	SA	3.44	0.60	SA	3.70	0.47	SA
4.) The activity helped me in deciding early on my career interest/s.	3.51	0.51	SA	3.44	0.60	SA	3.70	0.60	SA
5.) My experience on this activity helped me on what to expect during an interview.	3.73	0.45	SA	3.46	0.60	SA	4.00	0.00	SA
6.) The activity gave me idea/s of what and how to prepare in applying for a job.	3.69	0.47	SA	3.56	0.50	SA	3.63	0.56	SA
7.) The activity should be conducted yearly.	3.76	0.43	SA	3.69	0.47	SA	3.50	0.63	SA
ORGANIZER/FACILITATOR									
1.) The staff/organizer was courteous and Accommodating	3.62	0.49	SA	3.67	0.48	SA	3.53	0.57	SA
	3.44	0.62	SA	3.64	0.58	SA	3.53	0.57	SA
2.) The staff/organizer was well-organized and well prepared.	3.76	0.43	SA	3.62	0.59	SA	3.57	0.57	SA
3.) The instructions were clearly stated and announced.	3.58	0.50	SA	3.56	0.55	SA	3.87	0.35	SA
4.) The dissemination of the information about the activity was adequate.	3.40	0.54	SA	3.46	0.64	SA	3.73	0.45	SA
VENUE/EQUIPMENT									
1.) The venue was appropriate for the activity.	3.44	0.59	SA	3.31	0.61	SA	3.57	0.50	SA
2.) The chairs and tables were adequate for the students and employers.	3.31	0.51	SA	3.59	0.55	SA	3.57	0.50	SA
OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY									
1.) Overall, the activity was excellent.	3.53	0.50	SA	3.59	0.55	SA	3.53	0.68	SA
Overall	3.52	0.52	SA	3.52	0.57	SA	3.63	0.51	SA

seminar on “Embracing One’s Career Choice” was shared with first-year college students to guide them and motivate them to pursue their career choices by staying in the degree programs they were enrolled in. The topics such as the labor market information and understanding career in the life span were discussed with the first-year college students.

The pre-employment orientation seminars (PEOS), in partnership with the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency, were also conducted for the graduating students. These seminars increased the

awareness and preparation of the graduating students in making decisions about whether to work abroad or not. Relevant information on illegal recruitment, human trafficking, and labor laws was shared with the participants.

In 2019, a seminar for graduating students on Developing 4.0 Youth: Preparing Graduates for the Fourth Industrial Revolution Workforce was conducted. The activity provided information and career guidance to graduates on the labor demands and working competencies they needed in the fourth industrial revolution. Graduating

students were able to reflect on their situations and their plans.

All these career guidance seminars and job placement services are vital for college students as they journey to their respective career paths. Activities such as these affect learning motivations and satisfaction (Hui-Chin Chu & Mei-Chi Hsieh, 2015). Based on the feedback from students, they hoped to have all these activities be done and implemented every year.

Effectiveness of Career Development Services

Table 3 presents the participants' ratings on the effectiveness of the career development services. Generally, it presents the benefits the students acquired while participating in the various activities. They found the activities helped them to a very great extent.

Based on the table, it reveals that the participants find the activities on career development *very much effective*, with an overall mean of 4.44. It means that it has helped them to a very great extent. The result suggests that the activities helped the students enhance their skills and other capabilities needed for employment.

One of the participants expressed that,

“The activities helped us be effective employees and taught us to follow the learnings that my Alma Mater taught during my college days” [sic]

“Because of these career development activities, I was able to know more about myself and become [sic] sure of what I want to be in the future. It made me a goal-driven person. I was able to make plans and made it by becoming the best teacher that I can be..”

Table 3

Effectiveness of Career Development

Career Development Dimension	Mean	Sd	Qualitative Description
I learned important abilities that would help me in achieving my goals in life.	4.54	0.59	Very much effective
The activities conducted enhanced my interpersonal skills.	4.53	0.57	Very much effective
The activities helped me develop my self-confidence	4.49	0.66	Very much effective
I was able to explore other potentialities that I thought I do not have	4.47	0.66	Very much effective
I developed self-determination.	4.47	0.66	Very much effective
I developed values needed in the workplace.	4.47	0.68	Very much effective
The information on career helped me to have greater self-awareness.	4.46	0.72	Very much effective
The activities helped me change my attitude towards work.	4.46	0.73	Very much effective
The activities helped me in my career decision-making.	4.45	0.7	Very much effective
The activities helped me in planning for my future.	4.42	0.75	Very much effective
Using the various career development activities provided in my college, I was able to formulate my career plans.	4.41	0.75	Very much effective
I established realistic career goal.	4.38	0.63	Very much effective
I gained further knowledge on various career opportunities.	4.37	0.67	Very much effective
The activities helped me in deciding early on my career interest.	4.37	0.74	Very much effective
I was able to identify my skills needed for my career choice.	4.33	0.83	Very much effective
OVERALL MEAN	4.44	0.067	Very much effective

With these statements, it is observed that the participants developed a sense of motivation based on what they learned from the activities. According to Chu, Hsieh, and Chang (2007), career development affects students' learning motivation and satisfaction. There is a relationship between learning motivations and learning satisfaction.

As shown in the table, the statement *"I have learned important abilities that would help me in achieving my goals in life"* has the highest mean of 4.54, which is described as *very much effective*. It means that the activities helped the students to a very great extent. It also implies that the students gained significant learnings from the activities in terms of career development.

The result is supported by the study of Kashefpakdel, Mann, and Schleicher (2016) on career development activities on student attitude towards school utility and its impact. It was found that there is a significant relationship between participation in career development activities. Also, there is more positive attitude towards schooling. Relationships to speaking with career advisor in school and attending a job fair have the most consistent positive effects. In another statement, *"the activities conducted enhanced my interpersonal skills"* has a mean of 4.53 which is also described as *very much effective*.

Again, it means that the activities helped the students to a very great extent. Developing interpersonal skills is critical. These are qualities and behavior exhibited while interacting with people. It also allows an individual to work well with others and makes them more able to achieve goals. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD, 2000) reported that communication or interpersonal skills

were the key to a thriving workplace environment. Also, some of the participants revealed that their interpersonal skills were developed by saying:

"They honed my skills to be ready to have a good life in a real-life setting," and "it is very important to help the student finalize their realistic goals in life in order to make the right choices and not to have regrets in the long run. Molding the interpersonal skills is a must to be given attention for the students to know how to handle and react to certain situations in their future workplace" [sic]

Although the statement, *"I was able to identify my skills needed for my career choice"* got the lowest mean of 4.33, however, it is still described as *very much effective*. It indicates that the activities helped the students to a very great extent.

The participants expressed that,

"It enhances our skills as professionals, and we are thankful for it."

"We are very thankful for the hard work and efforts of the University Guidance Office in helping us develop our skills and characters for our career"

These statements were supported by Ntnganda (2001), explaining that various colleges have created offices of career planning and placement services to advise students in making decisions concerning their vocational goals and help graduates secure or look for a job/employment in their specific field of study. Other statements mentioned by the participants include,

"It really led me straight to what I want in life especially in my career."

“Because of these career development activities, I was able to know more about myself and become sure of what I want to be in the future [sic]. It made me a goal-driven person; I was able to make plans and made it by becoming the best teacher that I can be.”

“Career development activities helped me focus on what opportunities present [sic] in my career and what steps must I make to grab these opportunities..”

It can be inferred that the activities helped the participants identify their strengths. More importantly, goal-setting allowed the participants the opportunity to plan for their future.

Effectiveness of Job Placement Services

Another activity provided for the students is job placement, mainly the annual conduct of a job fair participated by on-the-job-training (OJT) students, graduating students, and alumni. Based on Table 2, the participants found the activity *very effective*, with an overall mean of 4.19. It means that it has helped them to a great extent. It implies that the activity has given them the avenue or opportunity to apply what they have learned from the activities in career development.

The statement, *“I was able to apply my skills such as verbal communication during the job interview,”* has the highest mean of 4.46, which is described as *very much effective*. It implies that it has helped the students to a very great extent. One of the essential skills emphasized in the activities provided was communication. The ability to communicate is one of the most highly sought after skills by employers. Dench, Perryman and Giles (1998) claimed that oral communication is very crucial to

employers and in the majority of jobs. Such a claim is also highlighted in the survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers’ Job Outlook report (NACE, 2016), where the employers rated verbal communication skills as the most important when asked to assess the candidate skills/qualities. Undoubtedly, it was first in rank among other skills that include the ability to work in a team, and the ability to make decisions and solve problems. In 2018, another survey conducted among 201 employers by NACE found that the knowledge and skills taught in communication courses are essential to be hired, regardless of one’s major.

Another statement, *“the activities gave me ideas on what to prepare in applying for a job”*, has a mean of 4.42, which is *very much effective*. It means that it has helped the participants to a very great extent. One of the topics discussed for career development in preparation for job search or job application includes resume writing and dressing up for interviews, among others.

The participants mentioned that,

“These activities are very essential because it has [sic] given us the opportunity to capture what we will have to face when we apply for a job.”

“I am thankful for helping us and provide us a lot of job opportunities” [sic]

“It’s a very good idea to give job fair for graduating students so they can [sic] able to find job after graduation. That would help every students to apply their knowledge and skills they have learned from the 4 corners of the classroom” [sic]

As shown in the table, the statement

“I was able to get a job during the job fair” has the lowest mean of 3.49, which is still described *very effective*. It implies that some of the participants were accepted for the job they applied for. The activity conducted gave them employment opportunity. Further, one of the participants expressed that,

“It helps me to choose the right job that fits my skills and ability.”

However, it should also be noted that some of the participants suggested to focus on developing one’s confidence and inviting more employers to the job fair, saying

“They should focus more on how to develop a person’s confidence in a job interview.”

“During job placement activities, it is very much needed to make the students feel confident about themselves in order to deliver the right message to their future employer for confidence gives extra edge to the applicant” [sic]

“Should invite more job employers for alumni to have more options & choices” [sic]

Moreover, the study conducted by Beam (2015) on the impact of job fair attendance suggested that job fairs are essential tools for encouraging individuals to move to the formal sector and for providing information about labor market prospects. Also, the International Journal of Human Resource Studies (2020) cited that self-confidence of employee candidates’ will significantly influence and affect recruiters’ decisions and selection, support these responses.

Table 4
Effectiveness of Job Placement Services

Job Placement Dimension	Mean	Sd	Qualitative Description
I was able to apply my skills such as verbal communication during the job interview.	4.46	0.66	Very much effective
The activities gave me ideas on what to prepare in applying for a job.	4.42	0.69	Very much effective
The knowledge I acquired from various activities in career development helped me in applying for a job.	4.39	0.69	Very much effective
I was able to improve my confidence in speaking during job interviews.	4.30	0.78	Very much effective
I gained important insights during the conduct of job fair in the University.	4.26	0.80	Very much effective
I was given wider opportunities in search for employment.	4.21	0.92	Very much effective
The activity helped me get the right job.	4.13	0.85	Very much effective
The job fair conducted by the university has helped me in my present work/employment.	4.12	0.97	Very effective
I was given various options for job employment because of my skills	4.12	0.87	Very effective
I was able to get a job during the job fair	3.49	1.29	Very effective
OVERALL MEAN	4.19	0.18	Very effective

LEGEND: (4.21-5.00) – Very much effective; 3.41-4.20- Very effective; 2.61-3.40- Effective; 1.81-2.60- Not much effective; 1.00-1.81- Not effective

Regular conduct of various activities on career and job placement of the university greatly enhances students’ skills and abilities needed for employment. The College Placement Council (1991) posited that combining career-planning activities and job-search activities gave the students a holistic and developmental perspective of career development. As an output of the study, an intervention program on career development and job placement was developed.

Intervention Program for Career Development and Job Placement Services.

Intervention is considered an essential tool in improving the existing program and services for students in higher education institutions (HEI), particularly the Guidance programs. An intervention is developed to assist students in their personal, social, cognitive, emotional, and cognitive needs while in school. In terms of the Guidance program and services, generally, one of the goals is to give opportunities for the students and enhance their potential through the conduct of various activities for career development. These activities aim to assist the students in future employment.

In the case of HEIs, career seminars and orientation are part of the core functions of the guidance center. The activities given to the students are observed to be limited primarily because these are conducted only within a short period so as not to disrupt the scheduled classes of the students; hence, resulting in their inadequate learning experience as far as career development is concerned. Such limitation may be attributed to the students not getting a job during the job fair as revealed in the study. For HEIs, an existing program and services are already in place; however, given this scenario, an intervention program is designed to enhance career and job placement that consists of specific activities with corresponding initiatives.

Career Workshops. Career workshops are structured sets of activities designed for group setting. It is usually hosted by the Guidance Unit facilitated by the guidance counselors. A workshop may last less than an hour and may extend through several sessions or even multiple days. A trained

staff member or an individual familiar with the workshop's issues may deliver them, although a licensed professional is the primary host of a career workshop. During the workshops, specific topics and related activities are presented and discussed.

Career Talk: Radio Program. Radio is one of the most effective communication tools and is used to reach out to various population. Specifically, a radio program provides career information to the public, particularly the students. It is a live broadcast that covers career-related topics. Specifically, it purposely invites different resource speakers, such as professionals and the like to present and discuss issues related to skills, abilities, and significant career or job experiences. Further, a radio program is also designed to be interactive where listeners may have the opportunity to ask questions from the guests. Appropriate assistance will also be given to unique student population such as the indigenous peoples (IPs) and physically-challenged individuals.

Counselor-Free Interventions. Counselor-free interventions are activities utilizing available resources other than a career counselor to obtain information related to career development. The activity comes with casual or informal interactions with others and shares their interests, values, skills, preferences in relation to work or jobs, work personalities, and career aspirations. Exchanges may also occur using structured informal interviews, job shadowing, or professional networking.

Below is the intervention program to be implemented by the Guidance Unit of the university. The program shall cover a career workshop, a radio program, and counselor free interventions.

Career Development and Job Placement Intervention Program

Specific Activities	Initiatives
CAREER WORKSHOPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully plan activities focusing on the development of particular skills and complete specific tasks conducted for a series of sessions • Select special topics presented during the sessions facilitated by professionals or a corporate human resources representative, such as effective interviewing skills • Invite practicing professionals to talk about emerging trends and opportunities in their career fields • Actively assist students in learning how to begin professional networking • Invite professional organizations through the university to offer career workshops as part of a broader program, such as an annual conference for students
CAREER TALK: A RADIO PROGRAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide learning opportunities for students with a series of radio programs on career related topics • Invite resource speakers in various fields of (career) specialization
COUNSELOR - FREE INTERVENTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish career information that contains printed guides to career development • Adopt tools developed by professionals to assist students in self-directed career exploration activities.

Conclusion

Career and job placement services are highly implemented showing the significance, regularity, and constancy of its contribution to students' career readiness in the higher education institution. The students were able to get career information, exploration and direct experiences for job searching and job interview. They could reflect and make critical decisions on the career paths to take, putting consideration to their personal context and the labor demands. As a result, the integrative contextualized model-based program for career development and job placement in the institution is imperative.

Recommendations

1. The University Guidance Center, through the support of the Office of Student Support Services, may continue to regularly conduct career development and job placement services for the students on a semestral or yearly basis. Monitoring the effectiveness of its implementation is also encouraged.
2. The implementation of the career and job placement services be done on various platforms, especially during a force majeure period such as the pandemic.
3. Strengthen the linkages of the Guidance Center with various local, regional, national, and foreign agencies to have varied employers may be pursued.
4. A radio program may be utilized for broader dissemination of current career and job placement information.
5. The University Guidance Center may consider extension programs related to students' career development.
6. Establish linkages with professional organizations to enhance students' essential skills and abilities needed for employment.

References

- American Society for Training & Development. (2000). *Interpersonal skills in the workplace*. <https://study.amaze1990.com/interpersonal-skills-in-the-workplace/>
- Beam, E. (2015). *Do job fairs matter? Experimental evidence on the impact of job fair attendance*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285781829_Do_job_fairs_matter_Experimental_evidence_on_the_impact_of_job-fair_attendance
- Bjorkquist, P.M. (1987). Career development for the liberal arts

- students. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 28, 377.
- Bloxom, J.M., Bernes, K.B., Magnusson, K.C., Gunn, T.T., Bardick, A.D., Orr, D.T., & McKnight K.M. (2008). Grade 12 student career needs and perceptions of the effectiveness of career development services within high schools. *Canadian Journal of Counselling / Revue Canadienne de Counseling*, 42 (2), University of Lethbridge.
- Chu, H., Hsieh, M., & Chang, S. (2007). *A study of career development, learning motivation, and learning satisfaction of adult learners in unconventional scheduling graduate programs*. Academy of Human Resource Development International Research Conference in the Americas. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504762.pdf>
- College Placement Council. (1991). Career planning and placement survey: Special report, spotlight. Bethlehem, PA: Career Placement Council Foundation.
- Dench, S., Perryman, S., & Giles. L. (1998). *Employers' perceptions of key skills*. <https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/349.pdf>
- Dimopolous, A. (2020). Applicants' self-confidence influence in employment interview process according to recruiters' perception - An exploratory study in Greece. DOI: 10.5296/ijhrs.v10i2.16701
- Dunbar, M.H. (2019). Careers guidance and job placement services: The missing link between education and employment. In S. McGrath, , M. Mulder, J. Papier, & R. Suart (Eds). *Handbook of vocational education and training*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94532-3_49
- Erskine-Sackey, N. (2013). *Career and career development*. https://slideshare.net/takiyiwa_5/career-development-ppt-23392328
- European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. (2015). *Career guidance in unstable times: linking economic, social and individual benefits. Briefing note*. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/01056af6-6ae4-464f-a518-f7cd09d2896b/language-en>
- Hardesty, P.H. (1991). Undergraduate career courses for credit: A review and meta-analysis. *Journal of College Student Development*, 32, 184-185
- Hughes, K.L., & Carp, M.M. (2004). *School based career development: A synthesis of literature*. https://tc.columbia.edu/iee/PAPERS/CareerDevelopment02_04.pdf
- Kashefpakdel, E., Mann, A., & Schleicher, M. (2016). *The impact of career development activities on student attitudes towards school utility: an analysis of data from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)*. <https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-impact-of-career-development-activities-on-student-attitudes-December-2016-2.pdf>
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). *Predicting academic achievement motivation: Possible selves of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kenya*. <http://www.sciepub.com/reference/181291>

- Matthews, J.R., & Ware, M.E. (1988). Promoting the adviser's role. *College Teaching*, 36 (1), 34-36.
- McQuerry, L. (2018). *How to make career day interesting*. <https://work.chron/make-career-day-interesting-9093.html>
- National Association for Colleges & Employers. (2016). *Employers: Verbal communication most important candidate skill*. <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/employers-verbal-communication-most-important-candidate-skill/>
- Ntaganda, J.L. (2001). *College graduates' perception of placement-service impact at three selected institutions of higher education in the Michiana Area (2001)*. Dissertations. 606. <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dissertations/606>
- Oliver, L., and Spokane, A. (1988). Career-intervention outcome: What contributes to client gain? *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. DOI: 10.1037/0022-0167.35.4.447
- Lapan, R. T. (2004). *Career development across the K-16 years: Bridging the present to satisfying and successful futures*. American Counseling Association.
- Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2013). Social cognitive model of career self-management: Toward a unifying view of adaptive career behavior across the life span. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(4), 557-568. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033446>
- Quinn, M. T., & Lewsi, R.J. (1989). An attempt to measure a career-planning intervention in a traditional course. *Journal of College Student Development*, 30, 371-372.
- Resolutions approved by the National Conference on Graduate Education in Psychology. (1987). *American Psychologist*, 42(12), 1070-1084. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.42.12.1070>
- Roid, G., & Wendler, C. (1983). Writing bias detection and item writing technology. <https://www.eric.ed.gov/id?230564>
- Schneider, B., & Stevenson, D. (1999). *America's teenagers, motivated but directionless*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Super, D. E., Savickas, M. L., & Super, C. M. (1996). "The Life-span, life-space approach to careers." Pp. 121-178 in *Career choice and development*, (3rd). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Wright, S.L., Murdock, J.L., & Jenkins-Guarrneri, M.A. (2013). Career development among first year college students. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258144346-career-development-among=first-year-college-students>.