

Career Guidance services in academic libraries: A study of college libraries in Mumbai

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Abstract:

Choosing a right career is a crucial task in the modern world as multidisciplinary professional paths are available in today's job market. There is need to make an awareness among the college students about the different array of paths available to them to make a right choice. College libraries should perform this function for the youth. As they are serving the young generation. This paper mainly focuses on the status of the services provided by college libraries in Mumbai concerning career guidance.

Introduction:

In modern society, most people spend major part of their lives working in some capacity. Throughout history, both philosophers and psychologists have noted that the ability to successfully integrate working into your life is an important aspect of fitting into a society and maintaining mental health. Not only to obtain economic benefits from working but also to meet psychological needs. Such as developing sense of competency and finding meaning in your life. Therefore, choosing a career means more than just getting and working at a job. Choosing the right career can be a very daunting task especially in a world, which offers an array of paths, all of which seem to be leading to a golden goal. Careers can actually make or break one's life, so it is important to make the right choice. Career guidance can help students in pursuing the right courses, in the right colleges or institutes and can guide them in choosing a suitable career.

Choosing a career can be very satisfying if you have made the right choice. Like, the famous adage goes, if you choose the job you love, you don't have to work a single day in your life. On the other hand, a wrong decision can leave you wishing that you had trodden a different path. Education, of course, plays an important role in getting you the right job in your chosen field. The stepping-stones or pre-requisites for choosing own dream career are of course, the qualifications required to achieve it. With the right qualifications, the top careers are open to and the power of choice would be wide spread. Career counseling can guide students in selecting the courses suitable for them. The choice of faculty, colleges and university is vital as well, as each one differs in its outlook and approach. Each profession needs different knowledge and skills. The choice offered by various universities is also vast; with some of them offering Associate Degrees and online degrees, which make pursuing the requisite qualifications that much easier. This is especially so, if you are already in a job, and looking for a career change. The same is also helpful, if you are planning to pursue multiple courses at the same time. With proper career coaching, a job search would be easier and you would be able to bridge the gap between job-availability and your qualifications. Whether one is looking for a new career or a career change, career guidance can help in smoothening out this important path of transition.

Due to major transformations in the structure of work and careers student's decisions on careers have become more complex. While doing a career search it is imperative to have the correct career information. An informed choice is always a better bet than an uninformed one. The right career advice can help person to choose a career to suit individual personality as well as his aspirations. According to Sinz, "It is extremely important for colleges to offer career guidance aimed to help students make more informed and consequently better educational and career choices." A similar view given by Sharma states, "At the time of admission to the college, if educational guidance is provided to the pupils, many of them can be diverted towards more useful activities. This will reduce the burden

on university education too. Guidance helps the pupils in selecting their subjects or specialization, which help later in choosing their vocation.

College libraries can play a vital role in career guidance. Libraries ought to extend their support in all spheres of knowledge and by providing career information in the library; it will be helping the users to have an aim in their lives. As a quality career resource centre, library can play a major role in guiding and directing students in making more suitable career choices. Many libraries in Western countries are much ahead of us in providing career information to their users. At present, many of the universities and college in India are having their own websites to provide career information.

Objectives of study:

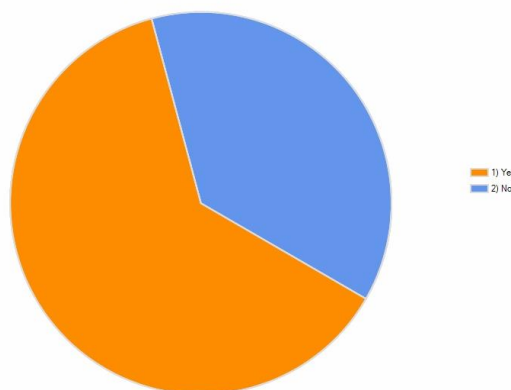
- 1) The objective of this paper is to study the present status of career information services provided by the college libraries in Mumbai.
- 2) To find out innovative practices adopted by the libraries in providing career guidance services.
- 3) To provide suggestions to librarians to facilitate career guidance services more effectively.

Methodology:

- 1) The present study has used exploratory research design to find the present status of career guidance services provided by the libraries.
- 2) A survey was conducted to obtain information through questionnaire. 20 college libraries were constituted as sample size for present study.
- 3) The data was analyzed by using statistical tools of simple averages, percentages, graphical methods and charts used for presenting data.

Analysis of data:

Do you provide career guidance service to students from library? If yes, since how long you are providing this service?



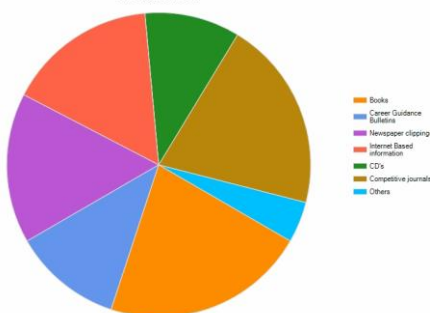
1.1 Career guidance services provided by libraries

The analysis shows that 62.5% college libraries within Mumbai provide career guidance services.

Sr. No.	Particulars	Percentage
1	Libraries having special collection on career related information	93.8
2	Libraries don't have special collection on career related information	6.3

It shows that 93.8% libraries have special collection on career related information. Out of which 43.8% college libraries have career guidance sources in print form. And 56.3% libraries have collection in both the forms i. e. print and non-print.

Which of the following alternative sources you use to provide career guidance?

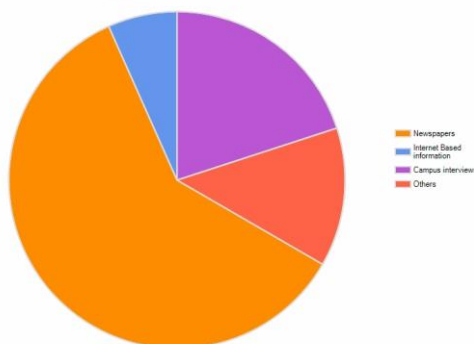


1.3 Forms of information sources on career related information

Sr. No.	Sources in forms	Percentage
1	Books	100
2	Career Guidance Bulletins	53.3
3	Newspaper clippings	73.3
4	Internet Based information	73.3
5	CD's	46.7
6	Competitive journals	93.3
7	Others	20.0

The chart indicates that books and competitive journals are the chief sources used by librarians for providing career sources. It was observed that all libraries acquires on an average 4 to 5 journals related to career information and general knowledge.

Which are the sources you use for providing job recruitment information to students?



1.4 Sources used for job alerts

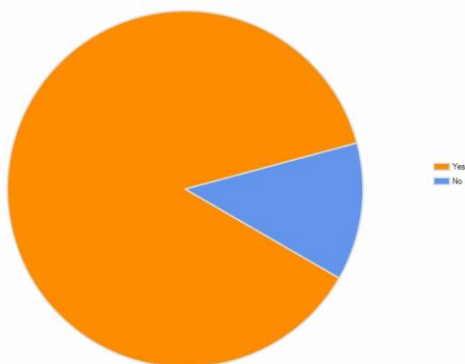
Sr. No.	Sources for job alerts	Percentage
1	Newspapers	60
2	Internet based information	6.7
3	Campus interviews	20
4	Others	13.3

Newspaper is a major source used by maximum librarians to inform students about job alerts.

Sr. No.	Grants for Collection devpt. on career guidance	Percentage
1	Colleges receiving UGC Grants	50
2	Not receiving UGC Grants	43.8
3	Others grants	6.3

From the studied samples 50%, college libraries are receiving UGC Grants for Career related collection development as shown above.

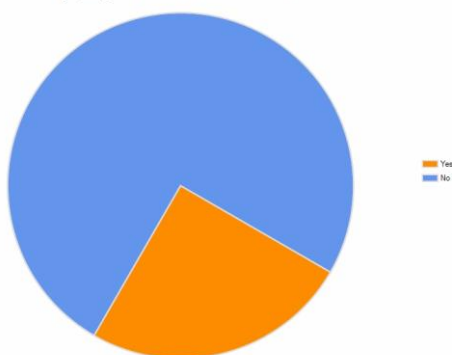
Do you have a Career Guidance Cell in your college?



1.5 Colleges having Career Guidance Cells

It is shown that 87.5% libraries have Career Guidance Cells in their colleges. That means 12.5% colleges do not have Career Guidance Cells.

If yes, are you a member of Career Guidance Cell?



1.6 Involvement of Librarian in UGC

Even though 87.5% of colleges having Career Guidance Cells, still only 25% librarians are the members of Career Guidance Cells.

Sr. No.	Particulars	Percentage
1	Colleges providing info about CG services on websites	31.3
2	Colleges not providing info about CG services on websites	68.8

Only 31.3% college libraries are providing information on their websites about career guidance service provided by library. Not even single colleges have an individual blog or portal on WWW for providing career related information.

Records of services provided by libraries regarding Career Guidance (in Percentage)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Percentage
1	College organize career Fairs & Workshops	75
2	College organize Book Exhibitions on CG	31.3
3	Colleges provide personal assistance or guidance to students	81.3
4	College organize mock interviews	12.5
5	Colleges provide and put information about job recruitments on library notice board	81.3

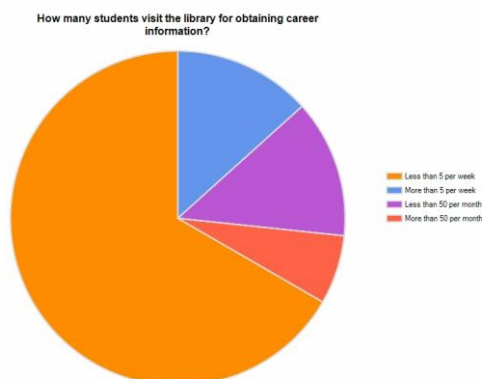
The records above are showing that 75 % libraries organize career fairs and workshops in colleges. But only 31.3% libraries organizing books exhibitions on career sources. Only 12.5% college

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organize organizes mock interviews for students. 81.3% colleges provide and put information about job recruitments on library notice boards. Out of which 69% college libraries update this information on monthly basis and 31% libraries update this information on weekly basis.

Only 12.5% college libraries maintain written records or statistics of career guidance services provided by them to students.



1.7 students visit the library for obtaining career information

Sr. No.	Students visit the library for obtaining career information	Percentage
1	Less than 5 per week	66.7%
2	More than 5 per week	13.3%
3	Less than 50 per month	13.3%
4	More than 50 per month	6.7%

Faculty wise statistics of students:

Sr. No.	Faculty of students	Percentage
1	Arts	20
2	Commerce	73.3
3	Science	6.7

It was seen that commerce students visit more in the library to obtain career guidance. Both career related information and job recruitments related information is equally in demand from all the faculty of students.

Librarians view about usage of CG services

Sr. No.	Use of Career Guidance services	Percentage
1	Extensive	12.5
2	Fair	75
3	Non-satisfactory	12.5

As per librarian's view 75% librarians feel that the usage of career guidance services made by students is fair.

Conclusion and Suggestions:

On the basis of above observation, one can conclude that even at the present situation college libraries does not play a satisfactory role in providing career information. It shows that almost all libraries have special collection on career related information still only few college libraries within Mumbai provide career guidance services. Many colleges have established career guidance cells, still very few librarians are actually involve in career guidance cell.

Use of ICT is not at all satisfactory in providing career services. All libraries have internet facilities, still it was seen that internet is not used satisfactorily for providing career services by many libraries. Very few colleges provide information about Career services on their websites. Not even a

single college has an individual blog or portal on WWW for providing career related information. Therefore, nobody is providing FAQ on career queries of students.

Most of the colleges provide and put information about job recruitments on library notice boards but very few libraries organize Book Exhibitions on career related sources.

Hardly 2 to 3 colleges organize mock interviews for students, whereas such preparation will be in more demand from students to face a competitive job market. The statistics of students visit to the library clearly shows that very few students visit library for obtaining career information even though almost all libraries have ample collection on career guidance.

Suggestions:

- Librarians should organize Book Exhibitions on career related sources on regular basis, i. e. at least once in a year. In addition to book exhibitions career talks and lectures can be organized at the same time, in libraries to attract and inform more students. Many students who are not aware of such services given by library will also get an awareness of availability of such services from library through these types of events.
- Digital displays can also be helpful to make students aware. Such types of digital displays can be put on all floors of the college building. As well as digital displays will have an ease in updating frequently.
- Librarian can gather career data from print, audio/visual, electronic and web-based sources and maintain special files/folders for easy access by students.
- Colleges can help students by organizing aptitude tests, Mock interviews, counseling sessions, seminars, discussion groups, etc.
- If a college has established Career Guidance Cell, the librarian should be an active member of the same.
- College librarian has a definite role to play in the career guidance, as he is the source of all information and holds the key to the world of knowledge. Therefore, librarian can be the leader or can collaborate with other members in the guidance cell by helping them to get the necessary information. If possible, career counselor can be appointed to guide students under Career Guidance Cell. University should have a special committee to see the proper functioning of career guidance cell in the colleges affiliated to them.
- Colleges should provide information about Career services on their websites. College should build a blog or portal on WWW for providing career related information. Hyperlinks should be provided to other career and recruitment related websites.

At present most of the academic libraries are providing career information informally, but only few are interested in providing proper guidance. As information organizer and provider librarian can play a major role in selecting appropriate career path especially in a world, which offers an array of paths. It is a need of time to improve the quality of services provided by libraries with regard to career guidance to cope up with the changing scenario of academic and professional education as well as dynamic job market.

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