

RESULT MAPPING OF CAREER GUIDANCE SESSIONS ON INFORMED CAREER DECISIONS AND ENROLLMENT IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

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ABBREVIATION

AES: Adult Entertainment Sector

PRAYASS: Protection from Risk and Assisting Young Girls and
Women in Accessing Social Services

CG: Career Guidance

SEE: Secondary Education Examination

Result Mapping of Career Guidance Sessions on Informed Career Decisions and Enrollment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

1. Introduction

Career guidance helps students make informed decisions about their education and career paths. It includes career education and counseling to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for these decisions. This approach supports both professional and personal growth by aligning career goals with personal development.

Career guidance offers information to navigate the job market and make good career choices. This includes identifying one's strengths, interests, and one's values, career assessments, job search strategies, and details about education and training opportunities.

At Right4Children, we provide career guidance sessions for students in grades 8, 9, and 10. These sessions help them explore their interests and skills during a crucial time of physical, emotional, and social development, leading to better educational and career choices.

One goal of career guidance is to help students understand their career and academic goals while promoting positive attitudes towards work and learning. This prepares them to make informed decisions about further studies and future careers, encouraging lifelong learning and adaptability in a changing job market.

Our aim is for all students, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, to achieve key milestones: understanding their career and academic goals, developing positive attitudes towards work and learning, integrating these goals with personal development, and using the knowledge and skills they acquire.

In essence, career guidance is about more than finding a job; it's about helping individuals discover and pursue their passions and talents, leading to greater personal and professional fulfillment. By offering the necessary support and resources, career guidance shapes well-rounded, adaptable, and resilient individuals ready to succeed in their lives.



Pic: Career guidance session in school.

Background



Pic: Career guidance session in school

The project "Promoting and Assisting Girls' Access to Technical Education and Employment" (PRAGATEE-Act4Girls) was initiated in response to the significant gap in school transition and high unemployment rates among Nepalese youth, particularly girls aged 15-24 years. These issues highlight a critical need to establish a clear connection between education and employment, a link currently lacking in Nepal. Additionally, there is a severe shortage of informed educational and career choices within the education system. Without proper career guidance, students struggle to make informed career decisions, often resulting in a mismatch between their interests and their field of study, as well as between market demand and supply.

In 2021-2022, career guidance session was piloted within the framework of "Promoting and Assisting Girls' Access to Technical Education and Employment" (PRAGATEE-Act4Girls) to targeting girls from grades 9 to 10 across 20 schools, reaching a total of 645 students. These sessions aimed to inform and orient students, mainly girls, about available educational and career options after grade 10. The goal was to facilitate informed career decisions based on the students' interests, strengths, and future prospects.

To evaluate the program's effectiveness and observe any changes in the trends and patterns of career choices, a result mapping study was planned. This study focuses on students who participated in the career guidance sessions during the 2021-2022 academic year and have since defined their career paths.

Objectives

- Ø To explore the factors influencing students' decisions in choosing a subject after SEE.
- Ø To identify the primary sources of information and decision-makers regarding educational pathways.
- Ø To determine the level of student satisfaction with their educational choices.
- Ø To determine the perceived usefulness of career guidance sessions in facilitating informed decision-making.

2. METHODOLOGY

A semi structured questionnaire was prepared for collecting data. Students who took CG sessions were identified with the help of attendance sheets. Quantitative data was collected through phone calls as their phone numbers were recorded in the attendance sheets. Adding more, we collected student's personal phone numbers from their parents of those students who recorded their parent's phone numbers in the attendance sheets. The interview was conducted in Nepali language so the interviewees would understand and be able to respond. The quantitative data was collected and recorded in Kobo toolbox. For a more in-depth understanding, case stories were gathered, involving interviews with five individuals.

Study Participants

Students who participated in Career Guidance sessions in school.

Data collection

All interviews were conducted in Nepali and subsequently transcribed and translated into English where the quantitative interviews were collected via phone. Following the collection of quantitative data, a list was compiled of students who had pursued both technical and non-technical studies. To gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the career guidance sessions, case stories were gathered from these students. Although we initially planned to conduct 10 individual interviews for the case stories, we stopped after completing 5, as the responses began to show significant repetition.

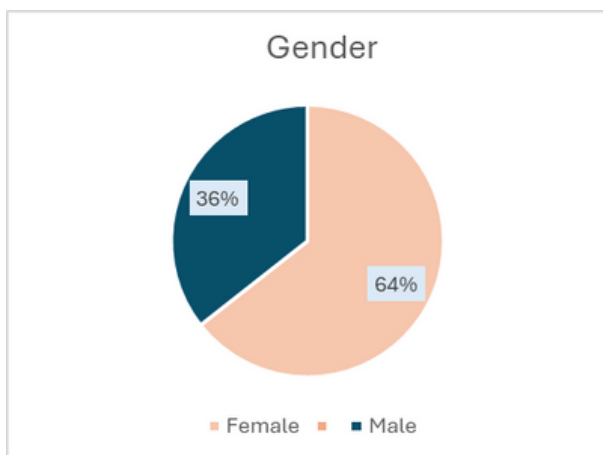
Statistical Analysis

The collected data from Kobo toolbox was transferred into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for comprehensive analysis. Initially, the data were downloaded in Excel format from Kobo Toolbox and imported into the SPSS software for further analysis. Within SPSS, all responses underwent a systematic coding process, and as needed, recoding was carried out to facilitate subsequent statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were performed for the analysis of the dataset.

3. Results

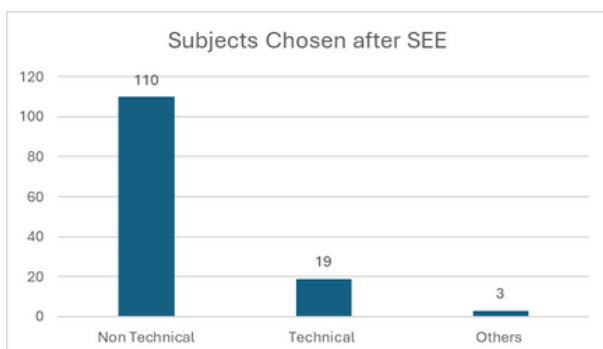
3.1 Gender

The diagram below shows the gender of 132 study participants. Among them, significant proportion of students 85 (64%) are female and remaining 47 (36%) are male.



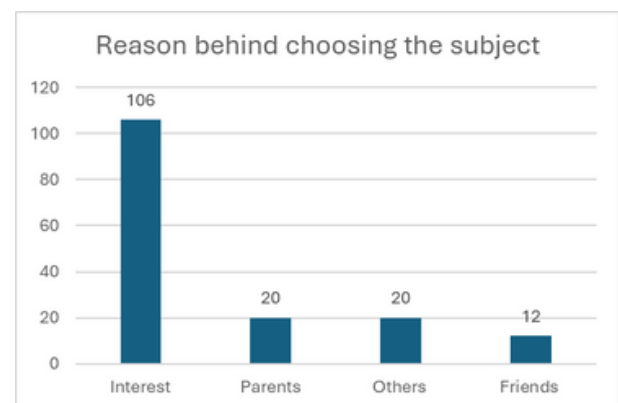
3.2 Subject chosen after SEE.

Out of 132 study participants, 110 (83%) had chosen non-technical whereas 19 (15%) had chosen technical. Similarly, the remaining 3 (2%) didn't choose any subject for further study. Instead, one got married and two of them decided to work.



3.3 Reason behind choosing the subject.

Out of 129 study participants, 106 (82%) chose their subject based on their interests. Likewise, 20 (16%) said parents were the main reason for choosing the subject while the remaining 12 (9%) answered friends. Here, others comprise their teachers, to go abroad and many more.



“From the very beginning, my mom encouraged me to pursue this subject, though I hadn't given it much thought initially. I planned to make my decision after seeing my results. It was only during my class 10 that I began to realize I could excel in this subject. My choice became clear following a career guidance session at my school. Both my mom and the career guidance session supported my decision to pursue a technical education”.

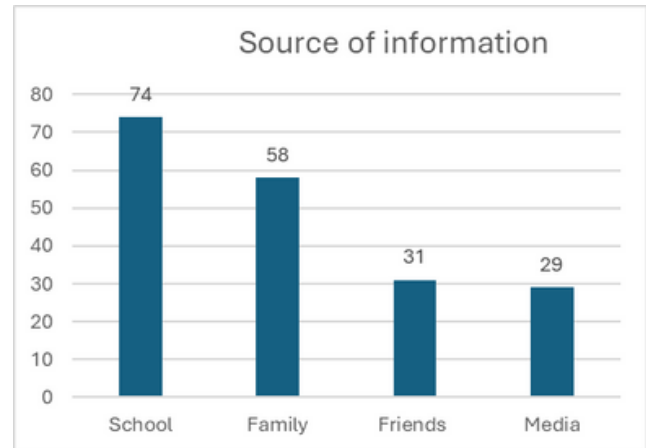
-Prakriti Adhikari, studying agricultural studies.



Pic: Prakriti Adhikari

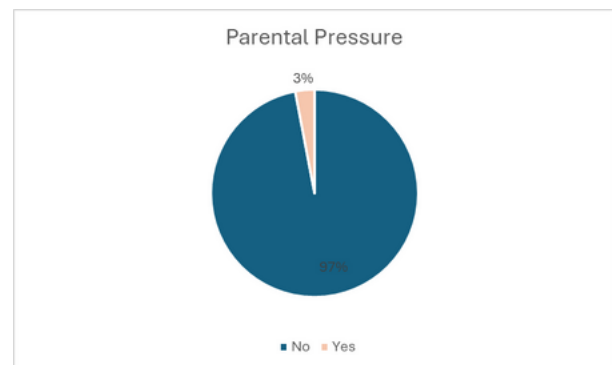
3.4 Source of information about the subject.

As shown in the diagram below, 74 (56%) got the information from school and 58 (44%) from their family. Likewise, 31 (24%) got the information from friends whereas 29 (22%) from the media.



3.5 Parental pressure for choosing a subject.

125 (97%) responded that they had no pressure from their parents whereas the remaining 4 (3%) said they had.



3.6 Decision maker for study.

113 (68%) students responded that they themselves were the decision makers for their study while 32 (19%) responded that it was their family. Likewise, schools and friends were the decision makers for the students i.e. 14 (9%) and 7 (4%) respectively.

Case studies among the students revealed that they made their decisions independently while also receiving support from their parents.

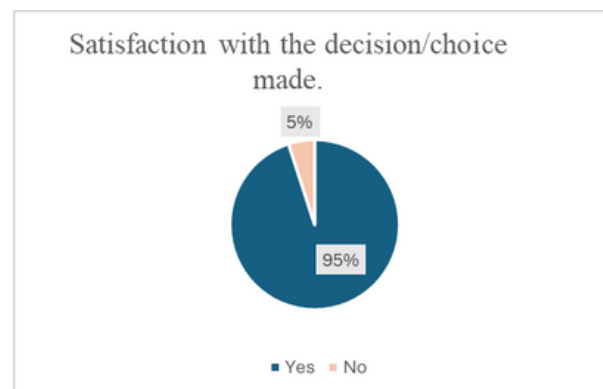
"Ma'am came and explained that there are other pathways available. I remember it all clearly. What stood out to me from the session was learning that we could choose technical diplomas, TSLC (technical school leaving certificate), and technical education starting from class 8 or the secondary level. Before that, we all had a single mindset focused only on +2" Janak reflected. We all think in one direction without considering alternative options. We simply didn't know.

Janak Raj Bhandari, currently pursuing a diploma in animal science, shares "From around class 9 or 10, I was determined to study animal science. Career guidance session helped me to further understand the field I was about to choose. My father also gave me the freedom of choice. He assured me, 'Whatever you want to do in life, I am here for financial support. Don't worry much. Make up your mind and do whatever you feel is right.' His support allowed me to confidently pursue my passion."

Janak is 19 years old, and he wants to do a government job staying in the country.

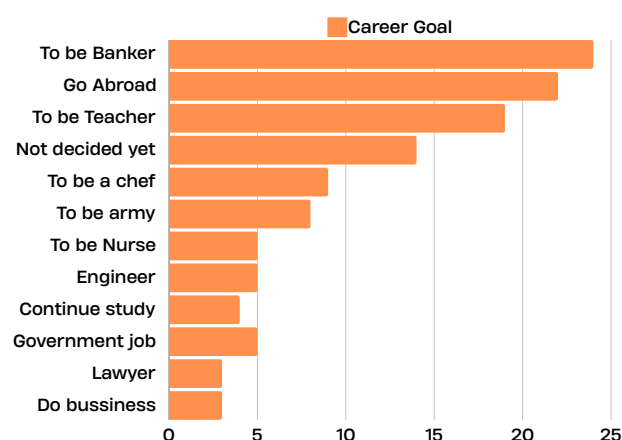
3.7 Satisfaction with the decision/choice made.

123 (95%) study participants responded that they are satisfied with their decision whereas 6 (5%) of them are not. Out of the 6 respondents who expressed dissatisfaction, 5 are currently studying subjects different from their initial preferences while 1 is struggling with accounts.



3.8 Career goal

As shown in the diagram below, 24 students aspire to become bankers, and 22 plan to go abroad. 19 students aim to be teachers, while 14 are still undecided about their career paths. 9 students wish to become chefs, and eight aspire to join the army. Five students each want to be nurses, engineers, or hold government jobs. Three students aim to become lawyers, and another three want to start their own businesses. The remaining 7 out of 129 students have diverse goals, including becoming doctors, pharmacists, lab technicians, managers, painters, journalists, and educators who inspire others.



Sajana Chapagain, a 15-year-old currently enrolled in the first year of her Diploma in Pharmacy, reflects on her career guidance session and the valuable advice she received. She recalls, "During the career guidance session, the sisters explained how we could align our interests, strengths, and values with potential career paths. After deciding to pursue pharmacy, I had many questions about the field, such as what opportunities it offers and how one can earn a living. They answered all my queries and informed me that after obtaining my license, I could even open my own pharmacy."

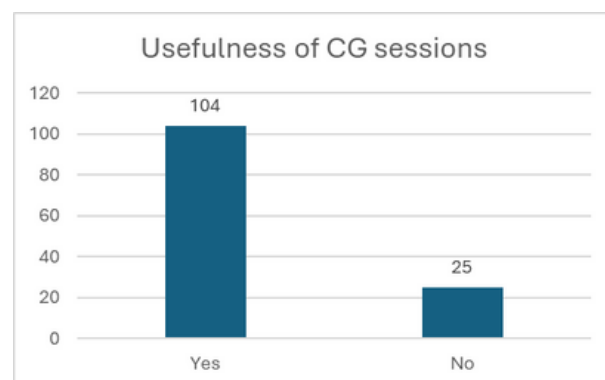
Sajana also sought advice from her parents and sister. They encouraged her to pursue whatever field she found interesting or manageable, offering their full support in her choice of study.



Pic: Sajana Chapagain

3.9 Usefulness of career guidance for choosing a field of study.

104 (81%) said that the career guidance session was useful for their field of study whereas 25 (19%) said that it didn't help them.



Lakshman Sharma, studying Major English says- during the CG session, ma'am emphasized the importance of having clear goals. She advised us to understand our goals thoroughly and dedicate time to them. This guidance was incredibly helpful to me.

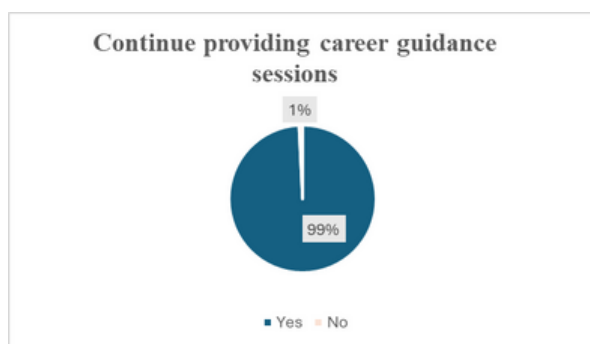
Lakshman aspires to excel in securing a government job to transform the education system in our country. He believes that to bring about this change, he must first become highly educated.



Pic: Lakshman Sharma

3.10 Continue providing career guidance sessions for high schools.

Almost all students, 128 (99%) recommended to continue providing career guidance sessions for high schools whereas 1 (1%) didn't.



3.11 The most appropriate grade for career guidance sessions.

As per the respondent of the students, the most appropriate grade for career guidance sessions is from class 8 to 12.

4. CONCLUSION

The result shows that students are largely satisfied with their decisions and find career guidance sessions beneficial. The findings highlight the contentment among most of the students regarding their educational choices and career guidance. The data reveals that most students are independently choosing their fields of study based primarily on their interests, with minimal parental pressure.

It also shows the importance of personal interest in subject choice among students and the supportive yet non-pressuring role of parents. The high satisfaction levels among students suggest that allowing them to make independent choices leads to positive outcomes. However, there is a need to maintain the effectiveness of career guidance sessions to ensure they are beneficial for a larger proportion of students. These insights can inform educational institutions and policymakers to better support students in their academic and career decisions.

5. LIMITATION

The collection of quantitative data was hindered by several factors. Firstly, many students had relocated for higher studies, compelling us for data collection through phone calls. However, the provided contact numbers were often incorrect or unreachable, significantly limiting our ability to reach the students. Additionally reaching out to the students proved challenging for two main reasons:

1. The students had moved to different locations for further studies, making it impossible to reach them.
2. Those who were reachable often declined to participate in the study.