

The Practice of Career Counseling in Taiwan

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Introduction

Taiwan is an island in the northwest of the Pacific Ocean, located in the eastern part of Asia and close to Japan and the Philippines. The total area of Taiwan is about 36,000 km². The population of Taiwan is about 23 million people (Ministry of Interior, 2017).

In Taiwan, the implementation of career counseling started at the middle school level in 1968, when the “Nine-year Compulsory Education System” began. Many students tried to find a job after they graduated if they did not plan to go to high school. However, in school, career counseling was not so important because teachers and students put more effort into academic competition. On the other hand, in technical high school, vocational education was the focus of the students’ learning. Now, due to the implementation of the “12-year compulsory education,” all students are encouraged to take career planning courses to think about their future.

At university, both career counseling and job placement are important areas of career practice. Both counseling psychologists and counselors at the University Student Personnel Services and Job Placement Center provide testing services, career information, and career counseling. The students have many opportunities to do career exploration and learn more about the world of work.

The least important part seems to be in elementary school. Children are always thought of as playing, studying, and do not need any career counseling. However, after the “12-Year-Compulsory Education” policy was implemented, we added comprehensive courses which include career exploration to assist children with interest development and knowledge of the world of work. We will introduce career practices at each level in the following paragraphs.

Career Counseling Practice in K-12

School System

Taiwan has been experiencing a series of reforms to guidance counseling in schools in the past ten years. The government amended the Civil Education Act in 2011 and a new Student Guidance and Counseling Act will be implemented on August 1st, 2017. According to the Act, elementary schools with 24 or fewer classes shall employ one full-time guidance counselor; junior high schools with 20 or fewer classes shall employ one full-time guidance counselor and those with 21 or more classes shall employ two guidance counselors. Schools at both levels shall try to meet the requirement of the guidance counselor staffing provision by August 1st, 2017, when the new Student Guidance and Counseling Act is implemented. After that, elementary schools with 24 or fewer classes shall employ one full-time guidance

counselor. Junior high schools with 15 or fewer classes shall employ one full-time guidance counselor and those with 16 or more classes shall employ one full-time guidance counselor for every additional 15 classes. Over the past five years, the number of guidance counselors has increased and the number will be substantially increased after August 1st, 2017. Now, the total number of full-time guidance counselors in elementary schools and junior high schools is around 3,650 and it is estimated that the number will increase to 7,650 full-time guidance counselors in the future. The number indicates that currently, a guidance counselor provides guidance and counseling service to every 755 students and the ratio shall be reduced to be one guidance counselor to every 305 students in the future.

Career Counseling in Elementary Schools

In Taiwan, career education in elementary school is integrated into all subjects. Integrative activities in elementary school include some career education content. Homeroom teachers or integrative activity teachers are the primary career education providers. Career education is not a compulsory subject for elementary school teachers when they receive education training in school. Designing career education programs and combining them with integrative activity learning is a new field for most elementary teachers (Ministry of Education, 2011).

While a number of career courses and activities have been specifically designed for the junior and senior high school levels, career practice at the elementary school level has not been easy to implement. There have been three main challenges in implementing career practice at that level. The first challenge, which elementary schools have had in introducing career practice, is getting enough teachers to buy into the method completely. One of the reasons for their hesitancy is that they have not received enough training in career practice when they were trained to be elementary school teachers. Career practice is an elective, not a required course. As a result, few teachers in training to be elementary school teachers have elected to take it. The second challenge that schools have had is the long-standing views of teachers, administrative staff, and parents, that it is not necessary to implement career practice in elementary school. The reason for this is that students in elementary school do not have to face choices related to their careers yet. In addition, since all students will eventually go to junior high school, many people think it is too early, at this stage, to think about what jobs they will enter in the future. As a result, they don't think it is important for elementary school students to take it. The third challenge, that schools have had, is getting enough data to evaluate the effects of career practice. One reason for this is that the government has merged career practice into every subject at the elementary school level, so career education is not a specific subject. While there are general goals for students at the elementary school level, there are no clearly defined goals or standards at each level of elementary school. As a result, there are no textbooks or specifically-designed materials, and teachers do not have enough motivation or sufficient background to create materials.

Fortunately, there are three solutions to the challenges facing the adoption of career practice in elementary schools. The first solution is to make career-training required in teacher-training programs for elementary teachers. It will help teachers to learn about the importance of career practice and how to implement it. Then, they may be less resistant to

trying it. The second solution is to add career exploration classes into the curriculum at the elementary school level. The content of these specific classes should enable students to explore professions, give them personal, hands-on experiences, and enable them to discuss which careers they like or dislike. This will help students further understand themselves and their interests. The third solution is to get parents to buy in. Some school activities such as volunteering to go on field trips or describing their work experience, are designed to get parents involved in career education. The benefits of getting parents to buy in are that parents will learn the value of career education and students will be able to get more resources from parents, who can provide knowledge about jobs.

In brief, putting career practice programs into elementary schools in Taiwan has been met with three challenges. These challenges include inadequate skills on the part of teachers, causing some teachers and parents to be unwilling to implement career practice and not able to collect enough information to assess the effectiveness of career practice. As a result of not learning about careers in elementary schools, many students are at a disadvantage. However, if we make career-training required in teacher-training program, add career exploration classes into the curriculum at elementary school level, and get parents to buy in, we can remove the barriers to career practice and ensure that students get the exposure to acquire knowledge about themselves and jobs that they need for the future.

Career Education and Counseling Practices in Junior High School

Career education and counseling practices in junior high school, in Taiwan, are implemented into career education and counseling courses and career counseling strategies. The former is provided in integrative activity courses, including self-exploration, occupational and career information exploration, and decision-making skills. The implementation of the latter is diverse, including administering assessments, providing technical arts education, and building a career portfolio. The Teacher Education Program Integrative Activity Learning Program includes 48 credits of required courses. The number of integrative field teachers varies according to the school size.

Taiwanese government has been promoting a Twelve-Year Public Education Program in recent years, which advocates aptitude guidance implementation in school and hopes to offer students more diverse opportunities to fully participate in career exploration. For career education, the Ministry of Education developed several plans to guide students to explore their own futures. The following is a brief summary of career development education in Taiwan.

Technical Education

Technical Education is a mature and well-developed education policy that has been implemented in Taiwan for junior high school students for a long time. The purpose of this policy is to develop students' skills in self-exploration, career exploration, simulation observation, practical skills development, and career preparation. Technical Education Program establishes a vocational group plan that includes 13 vocational groups—Electrical Engineering and Electronic Engineering Group, Mechanical Engineering Group, Power Mechanical Engineering Group, Chemical Engineering Group, Civil Engineering and

Architecture Group, Design Group, Hospitality Group, Commerce and Management Group, Home Economics Group, Agriculture Group, Food Science Group, Fishery Management Group, and Marine Technology Group. Schools may establish one to four vocational groups according to students' interests and needs. The ninth graders who possess greater abilities, aptitudes, or interests in learning technical skills or who have poor academic performance may take courses respectively from one to two vocational groups in the first and second semesters in the ninth grader year. Some courses are provided within the students' junior high schools and some courses are provided through school cooperation with other junior high schools, senior high schools, technical institutes, vocational training centers or nongovernmental organizations nearby. Students who take technical courses start with practical skill development, and the lessons of the technical courses are very different from common junior high school education.

The technical education program is very important and meaningful to junior high school students. The students who take technical courses may learn some practical skills in their areas of interest, and the courses also satisfy students' needs for learning academic skills. Those who have taken the relevant vocational courses are encouraged to enter five-year junior colleges before the entrance exams, and the courses the students have taken in high school are viewed as a bridge to vocational school courses. Therefore, the technical courses are very helpful for the students' future education. In addition, the learning process in the technical courses may arouse students' interest in learning, and further develop self-identity as well as confidence about their future.

Career Navigator Dashboard (Digital Student Career Counseling System)

The Career Navigator Dashboard (CND) is a digital career counseling system that was developed by the Taipei City Government. The CND is used to integrate students' school performance in learning and in daily life, and it provides "a Take-Away Gift for the graduates" when the students graduate from junior high school. Junior high students develop an e-book as a reference for future advanced studies and career counseling. The CND integrates students' performance in daily life, including My Growth Story, Learning Achievements and Special Performances, Service Learning, with the Results of Psychological Tests, Career Integration and Future Plans, Feedback from Homeroom Teachers, Feedback from Parents, etc. For junior high school students in Taiwan, schoolteachers and parents are key roles for their future career development; therefore, homeroom teachers and parents also have access to operate this digital student career counseling system. Homeroom teachers and school guidance counselors regularly provide information related to their observations and feedback on students' characteristics, and parents can discuss and make plans related to their children's future development with their children based on the information provided by teachers.

The value of CND is that the CND focuses students' attention to their career during their high school years. The process of filling in the data and making their personal record helps students integrate all kinds of information about themselves. They are able to think about themselves based on the questions such as, "What kind of person I am? What do I want to do? What strengths and advantages do I have?" After launching the CND, relevant data are

collected continuously whether students choose advanced studies or enter the workplace. All the data on the CND will be useful to students either for self-understanding or writing résumés when students seek employment in the future. Most important of all, these activities help students develop meaningful goals and abilities to make plans for the future and they may better understand how to systematically approach their goals. However, it takes efforts for junior high school counselors to effectively implement the CND, including the system management and data completion. It may also take time to widely promote and effectively utilize the CND to have homeroom teachers and parents involved with this digital career counseling system.

Junior high school is an appropriate time for students to begin to explore their interests, passions and purposes. The central government agrees with and supports this idea, so for the past forty years, schools have provided students with career guidance. However, it is time to evaluate this program because it does not seem to be as effective as it once was. There appear to be three weaknesses in the implementation of career guidance, and those weaknesses are making it difficult to reach young people today.

The first weakness in the implementation of career guidance is that Taiwan's test-based system promotes dependency in both students and teachers. First, the implementation of career guidance in junior high school has been top-down, meaning materials and courses are designed for students, and these materials are the same for all students. The courses include self-exploration, job knowledge, self-evaluation, and making a career choice. Students are taught to enhance their knowledge through tests and inventories, such as interest inventories, aptitude scales, and values inventories. Students evaluate themselves and make decisions based on the tests results. Although the system enables students to receive fast and specific feedback, it may also cause them to become passive about exploring their personal interests. Moreover, it ignores context factors, like parents, peer pressure and their academic performance.

In addition, teachers are expected to use tests to assess the students' interests, aptitudes, values, strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations based on those tests results. The weaknesses of this method are that teachers ignore differences in motivation and needs and that they don't have enough time to explain test results to their students one-to-one, an approach which would help teachers to understand the students' needs. They also didn't have time to explain how the test results can be used by students.

The second weakness of career guidance involves the implementation of career portfolios. The government requires all junior high students to complete portfolios, which record their exploration of careers and their assessment results. The content of the portfolios includes students' career goals, academic achievements, favorite subjects, test and inventory results, and evidence of parental inspections. The purpose of implementing career portfolios is to enable students to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and then use the information to shape a picture of their futures. However, the effectiveness of the program is dependent upon how it is implemented. Instead of receiving enough guidance and coaching during class, students are usually assigned the work as homework and the relevance of the questions is rarely explained. The students put little effort into completing it, and don't answer questions

from the heart. Finally, portfolios are unreliable, for they don't show students' real experiences and interests. The process does not enable students to expand their interests or make decisions about their futures.

The third weakness of career guidance is that it is too time-consuming. Career counselors are too busy dealing with and finishing required actions, such as administering career tests and inventories, completing students' portfolios, and integrating all of the data from career inspections, which are government-mandated reviews of career planning methods/procedures. This results in their having no freedom to develop a career program that would cultivate students' motivation to explore their interests. It prevents career counselors from designing activities that would encourage students to have new experiences and prevents them from considering ways to integrate career themes into academic subjects to enable students to connect career practice and academic learning. Ideally, implementation of career guidance would not only be top-down, but also bottom-up. Bottom-up career guidance would be school-centered, as well as student-centered, and that would better fit both the students' and the schools' needs.

In conclusion, junior high school is the appropriate time for students to add different experiences to explore their interests, passions and purposes. To enhance the effectiveness of career guidance, understanding the weaknesses of its implementation is important. There appear to be three weaknesses in the implementation of career guidance: students may become dependent upon tests, may not understand how to use their portfolios, and may not have their needs addressed by the materials used in career practice programs. For junior high schools in Taiwan, the purpose of implementing career guidance is not to frustrate students, but to enable them to have the confidence to listen to their inner voice. It is not doing this presently.

Career Counseling in Senior High School

The development of career counseling practice is the most complete at the senior high level. Senior high school students participate in a one-year-long career planning course, at school, for the selection of further education or occupations. The course can be provided in any grade of senior high school. Course teachers are required to have a senior high school teacher certificate for teaching career planning. To qualify for this certificate, course teachers must have obtained credits related to being a high school teacher and credits related to career education, including the implementation of career counseling and career planning courses, and vocational and career information analysis courses. In addition to career planning courses, counseling and guidance rooms in senior high school also provide various activities and programs to assist students in gaining self-awareness or further understanding all kinds of college majors and the path for advancing their education. There are 779 career planning program teachers in senior high and vocational school (Department of Statistics, 2013). The percentage of program enrollment is 100%. The Teacher Education Integrative Activity Learning Program includes 48 credits of required courses and a senior high school career planning course teacher certificate (Student Guidance and Counseling Act, 2014).

The counseling centers in high schools provide services to students regarding the following aspects:

Career guidance program. The program contains three parts:

- a. self-exploration;
- b. college major choice or occupational exploration; and
- c. assisting students in evaluating the impact of family and social environment on their career choices.

Counseling centers design and implement career courses lasting one semester or one academic year. Weekly guidance classes help students enhance self-awareness by discovering their own personality traits, interests, aptitudes and values.

Type of career counseling. The most common types are individual career counseling, group career counseling, and career assessment administration. Career counselors of the counseling centers help students who are motivated to understand themselves explore their interests and abilities via group or individual psychological assessments, card sorts, career exploration groups, etc. Through these activities, students can gradually develop an awareness of themselves.

Career guidance activities. The counseling centers also help students obtain information about college major choices and occupation choices by:

- Developing reports for the 18 college majors;
- College department visits;
- University department seminars;
- Multiple pathways to college seminars;
- Professional introduction seminars;
- University camps;
- Mock interviews for college entrance exam preparation; and
- Establishing career information websites, etc.

Based on these activities, students can obtain the knowledge that they need to help them make decisions about the future. Students can understand and differentiate their favorite majors during the process if they actively participate in it.

The development of career guidance in Taiwan has been expanding and improving for nearly 30 years. After the Multiple Pathways to College Admission Program was initiated for high school students in 2002, career guidance began drawing increasing attention within senior high schools. However, two challenges face career guidance services in senior high school in Taiwan. Firstly, students' career choices tend to be influenced by their family and the social context; students are not able to select the choices that they really want. Secondly, because Taiwan is an exam-driven society, students' interests and potentials are not greatly valued and appropriately explored. One solution is to encourage parents to join the activities of career education from schools, which allows families to expand their thinking about career decisions. Career counselors could maintain the efforts to assist students in exploring or clarifying what they want to do and to reduce the differences between parents and youth in senior high school.

Career Services in Higher Education in Taiwan

Overview of Major Programs and Services

According to the National Development Council (2017), the number of employed people in Taiwan averaged 11,260,000 in 2016. The statistical data showed that those employed people with higher education were approximately 8,670,000 people, where 5,060,000 were college graduates. The labor force participation rate was 58.75 %, and the unemployment rate was 3.92%. However, the unemployment rate for 20-to-24-year-olds was 13 %. In Taiwan, the dominant industries include the service industry and the high-tech manufacturing industry. In 2016, the service industry represented 63.15% of Taiwan's GDP and manufacturing accounted for 30.16 % of the GDP. The key position of the Information and Computing Technology (ICT) industry is illustrated but noting that Taiwan's foundry capacity and IC packaging and testing have topped the global market, accounting for 73.7 % and 51.8% of global market share.

There were 158 universities and 1,035,248 undergraduates in 2016, which means that there were 4.4 undergraduates among every 100 people in average (Ministry of Education, 2016). In Taiwan, most of the undergraduates earn diplomas for four-year programs, though a few of those may extend their study time to five or seven years.

After careful examination, the following career difficulties are what university students in Taiwan commonly faced:

- They do not understand themselves, nor the operation methods and requirements in the real world;
- They are not clear about the relationship between the professional knowledge they have learned and their future development;
- They have no idea how to handle the conflicts between what is ideal and what is real;
- They don't know how to make adequate decisions and lack information about the career world; and/or
- They lack motivation and the initiative for exploration.

These factors result in young university students being uncertain about their own future during their school years (Zhong, 2008). A significant gap between what students have learned and what can be applied appears when they enter the workplace. Facing this situation, higher education authorities are eager to provide various career services, including:

- Personal and career development such as personal exploration and career planning
- Academic development such as developing soft skills and professional expertise
- Career preparation such as career transition, campus recruitment, employment matching and starting a business
- Feedback on gifted qualification training such as surveys on the whereabouts of the graduates and an employers' satisfaction survey (Wu & Tien, 2016).

The Career Development Center or the Employment Counseling Center is mainly

responsible for the promotion and implementation of the above-mentioned services. By cooperating with other counseling units and teaching units within universities and by adopting different methods of teaching and activities, they hope to assist students to complete the eight major career tasks including exploration of aspirations, interests and passion, building of talent assets, mastery of networking, outlining of career vision, fulfillment of an ideal life style, self-marketing, adapting to the workplace, and continuous adjustment (Liu, Chen, & Wu, 2014).

Estimated number of career services provider or level of coverage in this setting.

Since each school has different characteristics and resources, the level and staffing of the unit responsible for career services are also different. Some schools combine career units with psychological counseling units or career units with alumni services and promote the career services together. Some schools set up a career development center separately, which is mainly responsible for the promotion of career services. According to the Student Guidance and Counseling Act, a counselor is assigned for every 1200 students, providing them with psychological or career consultation. Based on the 2016 statistics, 54.9% of career development centers at each university have between one to three staff, among which 61.0% are full time staff and 19.5% are part-time staff. In addition, 72.3% are female and 27.7% are male. The majority have obtained a master's degree (41.0%) and 39.4% have obtained a bachelor's degree (Wang & Chiao, 2015).

Apart from the fulltime staff, each university also recruits staff for their tutorial system, lecturers working in industry, career counselors, career facilitators, mentors in the industry, alumni and student peers to help promote career services. To illustrate career professional growth, for example from 2011 to 2013, the career service personnel who joined the profession or continued their educational training had an average of 28.79 hours/per person (Wang & Chiao, 2015).

Type of Training Preferred for the Service Providers

Here, we introduce common practices of university career services (Wu, 2015):

Investigate employment and career requirements. Each university traces its graduates' employment condition every year. In 2014, the government adopted two policies for higher education: graduate insurance and graduate tracking. The first policy established graduate insurance based on their employment situation (note: in Taiwan, insurance is provided to all employees, such as labor insurance, farming insurance, public employment insurance, military personnel insurance, and other insurance in accordance with their job attributes).

The second one provided a common version of questionnaire for each university to use in investigating its graduates' employment status in the first, third, and fifth years after their graduation. Each university must upload collected data to the education department of the government within the stipulated schedule, so that the data can be shared between government and universities.

Moreover, each university conducts an employer satisfaction survey on a regular basis

to understand employers' satisfactions with the graduates of its university. In addition, each university conducts a career requirement survey for its undergraduates, faculty, and staff. This means the university must collect career and employment data from its graduates, employers, undergraduates, faculties, and staff. The results are a valuable resource for career guidance service planning.

Provide free test platform to assist undergraduates' self-exploration. The financial tsunami in 2009 had a significant impact on increasing the unemployment rate of graduates in Taiwan. The government then invited experts and scholars to establish the Career & Competency Assessments Network (UCAN, <https://ucan.moe.edu.tw/index.asp>). It adopted the career interest survey, competency assessment, and competency development plan to enhance undergraduates' employability.

Soon afterwards, many universities established online platforms that included quantitative assessments, qualitative exploration, department introductions, and industrial information, such as the Chinese Career Net (CCN, <http://testcareer.ncue.edu.tw/>), Career & Vocational Helping System (CVHS, <http://www.cvhs.fju.edu.tw/>), KIP Regional Resource Center for Teaching and Learning (<http://youngeagle.kkp.nsysu.edu.tw/>), and so on. These online platforms are free from each university to assist undergraduates in their exploration of career planning and preparation.

Develop career educational materials and prompt each university to offer career courses. To promote undergraduates' career explorations and to reduce the gap of mismatch between education and work, the government invited experts and scholars to develop career educational materials for undergraduates and create career curriculum with local characteristics. These curriculums consisted of 7 topics: career concepts, personal and career development, academic development, career preparation, and educational outcomes. Each topic consists of a number of course units. Each university can offer these curricula as general courses or required or optional courses in every department.

Moreover, all universities are allowed to adjust and modify the educational materials in accordance with their students' characteristics and requirements, and they also can invite enterprise managers for collaborative education. According to these educational materials, since 2013, the government has conducted a series of teacher training workshops to enhance the course experience, and assist professors' and assistants' course preparations. Today, more and more departments of universities use these educational materials to offer career courses, and to improve undergraduates' career literacy, competency, and employability. In addition, some scholars take the *Book of Changes* as a core concept, and develop a career curriculum with local characteristics (Liu, 2016).

Promote diverse career guidance activities in order to meet different requirements. In addition to offering formal courses, Taiwan's higher education also plans many kinds of career guidance activities in tutor time and free time to serve students who have different career service needs. Besides individual career counseling which is available to students, there are other common career guidance activities, including:

- Arranging exploration tests, career consulting, seminars, or workshops in the tutor

- time or weekly assembly;
- Organizing continuous activities related to career topics and turning them into serial thematic activities, such as youth leadership camps, small business start-up classes, career thematic contests, and career dream plans;
 - Organizing career developmental access and providing customized career guidance in accordance with students' requirements, such as business start-up consulting and training courses for students who want to start a business; and, industrial lectures provided for students who want to understand work life;
 - Encouraging students to take certificate examinations, or offering certificate guidance courses to assist students to obtain the requirements for their future work;
 - Providing orientation training to assist students' transfer from school to work, such as last mile programs, resume advice, dynamic interview simulation, and so on; and
 - Arranging service-learning courses so can students compare their career direction and life meaning based on community participation; for instance, the dropouts service courses can provide chances for undergraduates to identify influences on their own lives and think about the importance of their social contributions.

Establish an information platform of practice and employment, and provide students with opportunities of practice and employment. The government and each university conducts orientation to recruitment and job and advanced study expositions to provide opportunities for graduates. The government also sets up many free websites for the employment and business start-ups, such as RICH (<https://rich.yda.gov.tw/>), Taiwan Jobs (<http://www.taiwanjobs.gov.tw/>), Youth Dreams (<http://young.ejob.gov.tw/>), and Employment Guidance (<http://cla.webfuture.com.tw/>). In addition, each university has established an employment website where students can find employment news and competency requirements information.

Career Services Provided in Government and Community

Since the government noticed the importance of career education and counseling for students, the Youth Guidance Office also set up some policies for university students' career development. In addition, the Ministry of Education also has "Curriculum Standards" for Comprehensive Courses, which includes career exploration and career education for first through ninth grades. For high school, they have standards for career planning courses. These are all part of the educational policy set by the Ministry of Education. To meet the various career consultation needs of young university students, a considerable number of universities and colleges incorporated career services in their key planning according to the attributes of the schools and regard career services as school policy. They combined the "Program for encouraging universities with excellent teaching" announced in 2006 by the Ministry of Education and the Technical and Vocational Education Act (2015) to promote career services through courses or activities. Currently the related regulations and key policies also include the following items:

- Key points for reviewing the funding for the service plan of Youth Development Administration of the Ministry of Education to subsidize college graduates when

starting their own businesses: The main purpose is to narrow the gap between graduation and employment of university and college students by establishing a mechanism for co-operation between industry and education to assist young university students to start a business.

- Key points for the planning of subsidies of universities and colleges for promoting career counseling work: The purpose is to help university and college students to develop their career blueprint and to plan properly for their career, to encourage the universities and colleges to combine their internal and external resources to develop and promote a strategy for career counseling work to increase the efficiency of career counseling. The subsidy mainly covers the development of university and college career course materials, the assistance for training the seed teachers for various universities and to offer career courses at the schools. In addition, the “Campus Career Ambassador Training Program/Propaganda Ambassador Program,” the “Experimental Program on the Whole Process of Transition from School to Work,” the “Career Problem Solving Program in the Information Era,” the “Career Development and Meaning of Life Program,” and career services and activities applied according to the schools’ characteristics are subsidized by means of cross-unit co-operation.
- The Youth’s Dream Come True Program launched by the Executive Yuan includes the two plans, namely “The Youth Employment Promotion Plan” and “The Youth’s Starting a Business Project,” which are managed by the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Economic Affairs respectively; aiming to increase youth’s employment rate and support youth in setting up their own businesses (cultural creative, new farmers, social enterprise, etc.). The Dream Come True Program combined the various related ministries and strengthened the involvement of different parties so that the resources and services can meet the actual requirements of youth, promote young labor’s development, and assist youth to build their dreams bravely and realize their dreams practically.

Training, Certification, and Supervision for Career Practitioners

Training of Career Guidance Teachers and Career Counseling Psychologists

For elementary, middle, and high school, guidance workers are trained in college or university schools of education together with prospective teachers in other subjects such as English, Math, and Science. Counseling psychologists who will work in university and private practice are trained by counseling psychology programs in universities.

Training curriculums for career counseling workers in the K-12 school system include counseling theories, interview skills, career counseling, group counseling, psychological testing applied in career counseling, career activity design and curriculum development, and teaching practicum.

University counseling psychologists are trained to be able to do counseling at the same time. The training is at Master’s level, which includes the following courses: counseling theories, counseling practice/specific topics, group counseling, psychologists testing and

diagnosis, mental health and abnormal psychology, law and ethics, plus part-time practicum and one year fulltime internship. During the learning process, supervision is important to further their learning process.

Typical Credentials, Certifications, and Supervision

All the teachers in school systems must pass national testing to obtain teaching certification. It's the same for counseling psychologists. The former is for trained quasi-teachers with a Bachelor's degree and the latter for those who with a Master's degree. After they earn certification, they must attend the organization (university or school) selection process to get a teaching job or work as a psychologist. In addition, there are also some certification systems for community or private workers doing career counseling. Sometimes university career practitioners also earned school certification.

The career services of various universities and colleges in Taiwan not only solve employment problems but also emphasize the students' self-development and career management services. To satisfy a variety of students' career requirements, various types of career service personnel are recruited. As mentioned previously, there are eight major categories, including professional psychological counseling personnel, employment service personnel, career consultant, teacher and academic advisor of the faculty, career advisor, industry advisor, peer service personnel and alumni. The three common and main categories of professional license are: (1) Consulting Psychologist refers to a person who graduated from a graduate school with a Master's degree in consulting and counseling or psychology and has passed the national examination for specialized occupation and technical personnel; (2) Employment Service Class B Technician refers to a person who has passed subject and practical examinations on the related regulations of occupation introduction and employment agency, recruitment, career consultation, and counseling and employment services; (3) Career Consultant includes a person who has obtained the qualification of "Career Development Facilitator" (CDF) as trained and certified by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) of the USA; the Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) trained by the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE) of the USA; or a "Career Consultant" who has completed the "Career Consultant Training Course" organized by the Career College and has passed the two phases of written examination and oral examination. Besides, the Workforce Development Agency has also promoted the personnel training on the "iCAP Competence-Oriented Course Quality Certification" since 2013.

Supervision and Continuing Education

During the training process, supervision is part of the requirement. The part-time practicum teachers need to be under supervision for at least half a year. This is also true during the internship process. Most of the teachers in the K-12 system will do peer supervision and discuss issues in curriculum development and practice.

Psychologists need to have at least 50 hours supervision during the internship before they take the certification test. Usually students have more than 50 hours. When they have more than three or five years of experience, many of them will attend the supervision training

and learn to be a supervisor. All guidance/counseling teachers and counseling psychologists must take specified hours of continuing training courses to renew their certification.

Summary and Future Directions

The career services for higher education in Taiwan is student oriented and values the importance of “appropriate praising of talent.” To meet the service requirement of the students as much as possible, schools encourage and even subsidize career service personnel to participate in the professional career trainings of CDA, GCDF, and ICAP. Schools also encourage the cross-field co-operation between different units in schools or inter-school co-operation to fully utilize resources. A national career counseling supervisors meeting for the universities and colleges is held annually for exchange of experience on professional studies and career work. As for the future, advanced information science and technology has changed people’s way of living. Career services for the university students not only assist them in choosing an occupation, but also guide them in developing themselves, facing changes realistically, and find their own meaning in life. Therefore, more efforts need to be spent in the aspects of professionalizing career services, regularizing staffing, enhancing career courses continuously and integrating resources.

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