

Chapter 9

A Suggested Curriculum in Career Education to Develop Business Secondary Schools Students' Career Knowledge Management Domains and Professional Thinking

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ABSTRACT

The current research aimed at designing a proposed curriculum in career education for business secondary schools students and measuring its effectiveness on developing career knowledge management domains and professional thinking skills. To achieve the desired goal, the researcher applied the system approach in designing the suggested career education curriculum, the developmental research methodology for developing the instructional materials and media, and the quasi-experimental design to measure the effectiveness the proposed curriculum on a sample of the third grade business secondary school students in Egypt. The suggested curriculum contains four main stages/phases: 1) career knowledge generation; 2) career knowledge organization; 3) career knowledge utilization; and 4) career knowledge distribution. These phases were integrated into one system to develop both career knowledge management skills and professional thinking among the target sample. The units of the curriculum were designed in an interactive way according to the principles of the blended-units approach that concentrates on knowledge and knowledge applications for achieving career requirements needed to joining 21st century business and administration jobs. A sample of 50 students enrolled in a business secondary school were selected randomly and divided equally into two groups: the experimental group (n= 25) and the control group

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(n= 25). The researcher developed two main instruments: 1) an achievement test; and 2) a professional thinking scale. The achievement test included two parts: 1) measuring the professional knowledge, and 2) performance measuring of the skills of designing professional portfolio. In addition, a rubric was used to evaluate the production of the professional portfolio. The findings revealed that the suggested curriculum was effective in developing both career knowledge management domains and professional thinking skills; as there were significant statistical differences between the two groups in favor of the experimental group. A set of educational recommendations were suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Business Secondary Education is a crucial transitional stage; where students are qualified to move from school to work. It should produce graduates who possess the requirements of labor market and career management knowledge. In Egypt, Business Secondary Education is an end- stage for the majority of students. It aims at students' preparation for one of the different commercial, official or service jobs through developing students' knowledge of financial and economic affairs (Abdul Quay, 2010). However, the Human Development Report (2010) for technical education and vocational training in Egypt has shown that the rate of unemployment among the graduates of career education remains high, as a result of career education inability to define the needs of labor market, inability to develop technologically-based education curricula or train students, poor participation of governmental agencies and private sector institutions in the preparation career curricula and students' training (UN Program, 2010, 182-169 (

Relating business secondary education curricula to the 21st century professional and technological requirements is a vital source of learner's preparation for work. However, reviewing curricula do not reflect professional decision-making, organizational behavioral skills or developed-professional abilities that increase students' professional awareness, job aptitude and practical skills and abilities (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003; Fouda, 2016; Mahmoud & Kaddouri, 2005, 11). Abdul Samea (2007) pointed out that many graduates who are unable to work do not possess skills necessary for employment. She also referred to these graduates' weak knowledge of jobs opportunities and low-esteem of work values. In addition, Abdul Quay (2010) pointed out that 95% of business education students reported the absence of labor market jobs explanations and requirements in curricula and their activities.

Abdelaziz (2014), Guez and Allen (2000) noted that both the general and career education face the challenges of rapid digital development, and its resulting applications in the field of electronic and virtual jobs; which calls for reconsideration of the aims and outputs of career curricula to prepare generations equipped with technical, initiative, autonomous, decision-making and professional aptitude skills to decrease unemployment. As a result, Al Gudibi (2010) recommended developing curricula that provide communication, thinking and job aptitude skills to meet technological changes.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Career Education

Moore (1986) defined career education as a directive program covering several areas to guide individuals' awareness of their abilities, interests and aptitudes in order to choose the right professions and have professional thinking.

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