

CDANZ RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Topic: *Careers resourcing in Deciles 9 and 10 state/state integrated and private/independent secondary schools in the Auckland region.*

By: **Catherine Stephens**

1 RESEARCH TITLE

Career resourcing in Deciles 9 and 10 state/state integrated and private/independent secondary schools in the Auckland region.

2 AIM AND SCOPE OF THE PROJECT:

Research Aim:

- To examine the similarities and differences between state/state integrated secondary schools and private/independent secondary schools in the Auckland region in regards to career resourcing both financial and staffing.

Participants:

- Heads of Departments/Teachers in Charge of Careers of deciles 9 & 10 state/state integrated and private/independent secondary schools in the Auckland region.
- 32 participants met the set criteria. Deciles 9&10 are high decile schools and Vaughan & Gardiner (2007) grouped these schools together as the students often have similar educational achievements and social needs. By limiting my research to deciles 9 &10 state/state integrated schools and by further narrowing it to a specific region I was able to examine the resourcing of “like” schools and compare them to private/independent who have a decile 10 rating.

3 BACKGROUND:

The career development of all young people is crucial to society as a whole. The young are our future and are vital to the social and economic development of New Zealand. Smith (1999) contends, “There is a strong theme running through literature that career information and guidance must play a key role in societies in the future if the notion of a knowledge economy are to be successful” (p.1).

“Internationally and nationally there has been renewed interest in career guidance as it benefits individuals and also society and the economy” (McMahon, 2004).

Adequate resourcing of schools both staffing and funding is required if effective career development practice is to occur in school.

In schools, the principle challenges are: to provide sufficient and human capital resources of the right type both within the school and the surrounding community; to ensure that these resources are dedicated to career guidance; and to make the best use of the resources available (OECD/European Communities 2004, p.6).

If young people are to reach their potential and be effective contributors to the community and New Zealand society as a whole, it is important that their career development needs are addressed and catered for by schools. Therefore career resourcing in schools, both financial and staffing, is paramount. By identifying the similarities and differences regarding careers resourcing in secondary schools I aimed to identify whether students of a similar socio economic grouping who have similar social, educational and career development needs, in a specific location in NZ have equal resourcing to assist their career development.

It was envisaged that this research may be of benefit to careers advisers in schools when lobbying senior management, Boards of Trustees or Boards of Governors, government agencies and policy makers to ensure that career resourcing is fair and equitable and utilised for the purpose for which it was intended. This data may also provide information for government and key stakeholders to assist in providing adequate resourcing for students in all secondary schools with similar needs so that they are provided with career development opportunities that are fair and equal. If this occurs both the students and New Zealand as a whole may benefit. “Effective information and guidance are essential to support lifelong learning and active employment policies as tools of economic growth and social equity, and that all citizen need to develop the skills to manage their careers” (Career Industry Council of Australia, 2007, p.5).

4 METHODOLOGY:

A quantitative approach: All HoD/TIC Careers in state/state integrated deciles 9 and 10 schools and private/ independent secondary schools in the Auckland region were sent in a questionnaire. This was an anonymous questionnaire as respondents were not required to identify themselves. It was sent by post and to 32 schools.

Response rate: 55% Private/ independent schools

45% State/state integrated schools

To ensure anonymity schools were grouped according to size using a U grade which relates to the school roll and is used as a means of determining a Principal’s salary

5 KEY FINDINGS:

There were identified differences and similarities between each group in regards to staff and financial resourcing:

Staffing:

The careers advisers in the schools that were part of the research had a narrower focus than careers advisers in other countries, which often took a more holistic approach of incorporated personal counselling with career education and guidance. In particular careers advisers in private/independent schools had singular roles compared to careers advisers in state/state integrated roles of a similar size who had multiple roles in the schools (many were STAR coordinators, transition teachers and/or had other teaching roles).

It appeared that the number of hours allocated to careers education and guidance per thousand students overall on average were similar for both types of schools, on examination however there were differences in how the hours were allocated to the career adviser role.

- State/state integrated had less time than private/integrated school career advisers. This demonstrated that a careers adviser in a state/state integrated school has a multitude of roles and staff and therefore there was minimal time available for one on one counselling (Vaughan & Gardiner, 2007) reported 54% of careers advisors
- On average private/independent schools have a ratio of just over one career adviser per thousand students which correlates to some schools internationally. There is on average one person in the department and careers advisers are less likely to have administrative support (50% compared with 89% for state/state integrated schools). Does this allow them to provide and organise a broad range of career education programmes both internally and externally? Will they be able to service all the student's career development needs and develop and lead a school wide approach to career education and guidance as modelled in CaPBL or will they offer a traditional vocational approach as suggested by Vaughan & Gardiner (2007)?
- Careers advisers in state/state integrated schools have half the time allocated to their role compared with private/integrated schools; on average just over 20 hours per 1,000

students. Are these staffing levels sufficient to provide for effective career practice and education in these schools to meet the career development needs of the 21st century student? The responsibilities of state/state integrated career advisers have increased but this is not reflected in the hours allocated. Most careers advisers are dissatisfied with the time allocated to their role and time issues have been identified as a barrier to providing effective practice (Vaughan & Gardiner, 2007; Thomson, 2005). ERO (2007) reported that only 12% of schools demonstrated effective career education and guidance practice. If this is to change time allocations need to be reviewed and regulations should be set regarding career staffing/student ratios.

Most state/state integrated schools have more careers staff than private/independent schools which perhaps reflects the broader range of career services these schools offer such under STAR and Gateway.

In both types of schools there were a higher number of careers advisers who had a careers specific qualification compared to the national average identified in other studies. This may be indicative of the type of and location of the school. The majority were teachers which is reflected nationally and internationally where most careers practitioners have a qualification that relates to the area in which they work. All careers advisers in the private/integrated schools had a teaching qualification as well as all holding or studying towards a career specific or counselling qualification. State/ state integrated schools careers advisers were less likely than private/integrated schools careers advisers to hold a career specific qualification and on average the qualifications were of a lower level. Perhaps the amount of time given for a careers specialist in these schools could be reflected in the discrepancy in the level of the qualifications that currently exist.

All careers advisers generally valued gaining a specific career related qualification which was in contrast to national trends (Thompson, 2005; Vaughan, & Gardiner, 2007). Their findings regarding barriers to further study concurred with my research whereby time and the cost were the greatest barriers to gaining a career specific qualification. Therefore to encourage study and lift the current level of qualifications of careers staff so that they have a specific career qualification the government should follow the Australian government's example whereby a number of career related study awards each year are allocated to both private/independent and state/state integrated schools. This would then result in more

qualified specialist career staff in schools to lead career education and guidance across the curriculum as modelled in CaPBL. The Australian Government CAT pilot found that for effective career practice and education in schools career and transition practitioners should have a set of core competencies (Australian Government, 2004). Therefore there should be one highly qualified career specialist per thousand students who could lead the career education and guidance in the school. Other careers staff should have a specific level of qualification/training that allows them to perform their role. If careers advisers in schools are to be “change agents” perhaps incentives for further theoretical study so that career advisers have a specific career qualification.

In all schools careers advisers are generally very experienced women teachers who were over 40 , with the majority in the 50 to 60+ age group and have been in their roles between 5-10 + years. Perhaps this can be attributed to the lack of a transparent linear pathway to senior management. A focus on qualifications may help to attract more men and enable a pathway to more senior positions within a school setting.

Financial resourcing:

There were a range of financial issues reported for both state/state integrated and private/independent schools.

Private/independent schools receive minimal financial resourcing compared to state/state integrated schools; they do not receive the CIGs grant nor are they eligible for STAR and Gateway funding. It is important to note that STAR and Gateway are tagged resources that fall outside the operational grant and therefore why are they unavailable to private/independent schools? Therefore private/independent schools are totally reliant on the school community, school policies and priorities for career staffing and funding.

Whilst general department allocation of funding is similar for all schools regardless of size there is a difference between the career education and guidance funding of private/independent schools and similar sized state/state integrated schools is \$100,000 - \$178,000. This can be attributed generally to STAR and Gateway. This is of major concern as all these schools are of a similar size and the key stakeholders have similar needs yet the funding for career education and guidance in the schools does not reflect this. Therefore there are many career development

opportunities that are unavailable to students in private/independent schools and as such is their career development and ability to fulfill their potential may be hindered as a result.

For state/state integrated schools there is a lack of transparency as to how the targeted CIGs grant is utilised. Thomson (2005) found many career staff believe it should be a tagged resource as are STAR and Gateway to ensure it is used for its intended purpose. With these resources comes additional responsibilities and they add to the role of the careers advisers yet this is not reflected in the time allocation given to careers advisers unless they are from large schools where careers advisers are less likely to be involved in these programmes.

Another difference between state/state integrated schools and private/integrated schools is the accessing of the services of Career Services. (Smith, 2001, p.1) contends that Career Services aims to strengthen “the provision of career planning in school” and ensuring that “New Zealanders have access to advice which will assist them to plan their learning and employment careers”. However their services and resources are not always available to private/independent schools that are required to pay for many of the services and resources that are freely available to state/state integrated schools.

6 CONCLUSION

My examination of the similarities and differences of the careers resourcing in deciles 9 & 10 secondary schools and private/independent schools in the Auckland region in regards to career resourcing both staffing and financial has highlighted the major resourcing deficiencies for both types of schools. There are a number of areas that need to be addressed if schools are to meet the career development needs of 21st century students.

Whilst private/independent schools are better resourced than state/state integrated schools in regards to specialist careers staff they do not have access to the funding and programmes that are available in state/state integrated schools. Private/independent school students do not have the same career development opportunities, such as STAR and Gateway, to gain the knowledge, skills and abilities to help them make informed career decisions so that they are better able to make a contribution to New Zealand society as a whole. In contrast state/state integrated schools are well resourced in terms of funding but they are not on the whole well resourced in terms of time allocation and specialist careers resourcing.

It is important that all young people, regardless of the educational institution they attend are given the equal opportunity to develop the skills, attitudes and understandings that will assist them to make informed decisions about school and future study and employment options. This will enable them to identify and use their talents to achieve their potential so that they can contribute and participate effectively in work and society as a whole. Therefore the government must adjust the way in which they resource both private/independent and state/state integrated to ensure that resourcing is fair and equitable and will meet the needs of all key stakeholders. “Watts, (2002) argues that “Public policy is crucial to career guidance work” (p. 1). “All of the countries are seeking to re-examine their career guidance systems in the context of encouraging lifelong learning and sustained employability for all” (Watts, 2002, p.4).

7 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The government regulates the careers industry as a whole and as such there are set requirements in regards to the qualifications of career development practitioners in schools with targeted careers study awards.
- The name careers adviser is changed to career development practitioner and educator
- There is one qualified career development practitioner in every school to lead career development interventions.
- Career staff within a school setting have the qualifications and training to perform their designated role.
- All schools receive a tagged Career Information and Guidance grant that is not part of the operational grant.
- Private/independent schools are eligible for STAR and Gateway funding.
- Private /independent schools are able to use the services and resources of Careers Services free of charge and they are able to receive the same professional development opportunities available to state and integrated careers staff free of charge.
- Private/independent schools are eligible for any future additional funding and initiatives that are offered to state and integrated schools.
- A review of the time allocated to the various roles that relate to meeting the career development needs of students is undertaken and as such a ratio of a career specialist per one thousand students is set.

8 REFERENCE LIST

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