

Career Counselling: A Precursor of Career and Personal Empowerment- A Comparative Systematic Review of Uganda and India

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Abstract: Career counselling (CC) is an essential foundation for learners in making informed career decisions and enhancing personal empowerment. In developing contexts, however, CC service provision remains uneven. This review compares Uganda and India to examine how CC is framed, delivered, and challenged in secondary schools and higher education institutions. The study employed a systematic literature review, following PRISMA guidelines, to search studies published between 2010 and 2025 across databases and institutional repositories. Studies were included if they focused on career counselling in secondary schools or higher education in Uganda or India. After screening, 20 studies were synthesised thematically under three objectives: the role of CC in supporting career and personal empowerment among learners, comparison of institutional and policy frameworks guiding delivery of CC services in both countries, and CC implementation challenges. The review revealed that CC services increase learners' awareness of career options, career maturity, improve decision-making, employability skills and build self-confidence. In Uganda, CC was discovered to be anchored in government policy, with the Ministry of Education providing structured guidelines through the Career Counselling Handbook, though implementation is insufficient. Equally, India, through the national education policy (NEP) and other government and private bodies, emphasises CC services to all learners, with a strong private sector involvement and technology-enabled platforms that expand access. Both countries face common challenges of underfunding, inadequate professional training, and a lack of timely and adequate CC services. The comparison highlights complementary strengths, with Uganda benefiting from structured policy support, whereas India leverages national, private and technological innovation. For both contexts, advancing CC requires enhanced policy backing, investment in counsellor training, inclusion of CC in the school curriculum and closer alignment with labour market demands.

Keywords: Career Counselling, Career Empowerment, Personal Empowerment, Policy Frameworks, Uganda, India, Systematic Review

