



# Career 360 Degree: teacher-led career counselling for lifelong learning in India

Good practice in using evidence for education policy and practice

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## Overview

### Summary

Career 360 Degree unfolded as a carefully sequenced journey over 18 months (January 2023–June 2024) at Delhi Public School Bilaspur, reaching over 90 students across Grades 8–12.

**Building Teacher Capacity (3 months):** The program began with teachers, recognizing that sustainable change must start with educator development. Twenty-two educators participated in 40 hours of structured training that extended beyond traditional professional development. Training covered interpreting psychometric assessments, integrating career conversations into classroom instruction, using digital mentoring platforms and planning long-term student development. Workshops, bite-sized microlearning modules and reflective discussions provided a structured space for teachers to address uncertainties regarding career guidance. The Edumilestones national framework served as the foundation.

**Understanding Each Student (2 months):** Students completed comprehensive psychometric assessments evaluating aptitudes (Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences), interests (Holland's RIASEC model), personality patterns, learning styles, emotional intelligence and career motivators. Teachers analyzed assessment reports as conversation starters, identifying each student's strengths, interest clusters, potential barriers and aptitude-aligned possibilities.

**Personalized Conversations (6 months, ongoing):** Each student received personalized 45-minute counselling sessions, typically three over the implementation period. These sessions were genuine dialogues, making sense of assessment insights, exploring subject choices, discovering careers previously unknown, navigating college options and mapping multi-year pathways tailored to each student.

Bringing Parents Along (4 sessions): Sixty-four parents joined workshops that bridged the gap between their aspirations and their child's strengths, introduced emerging career landscapes and built confidence in evidence-based decision-making.

Sustaining Teacher Learning (ongoing): Monthly professional learning communities provided spaces for teachers to share success and challenges, discuss real student cases, explore evolving career trends and conduct collaborative research, embodying UNESCO's vision of collective professional growth.

Throughout, AI-powered databases covering 550+ professions, stream planning tools and comprehensive roadmaps were integrated, ensuring technology enhanced, rather than replaced, human connection.

### **Organization (Relevant Website)**

Delhi Public School Bilaspur

### **SDG 4 target(s)**

4.3 Equal access to technical/vocational and higher education; 4.6 Universal Youth Literacy; 4.a Safe, inclusive and effective learning environments; 4.7 Education for sustainable development and global citizenship

### **Thematic area(s)**

Higher education; Education for global citizenship, human rights and peace; Digital skills and learning; Education policy and planning (sector-wide); Governance and management including leadership, participation and school governance; Foundational learning and skills

### **Policy stages(s)**

Situation analysis; Agenda setting; Policy planning; Policy Implementation; Policy monitoring

### **Timeframe**

January 2023–June 2024

## **Context**

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Career guidance in India, particularly in Tier-2 and Tier-3 regions, faces a profound crisis affecting millions of students annually. Research indicates that over 80% of Indian students experience significant confusion during career decision-making, with 65% making mismatched subject-course selections that negatively impact their academic progress and future employability.

In most Indian schools, teachers are passionate about their subjects but often uncertain about guiding students toward careers. This is not due to lack of commitment; pre-service and in-service teacher training programs typically do not include career counselling. Although the National Education Policy 2020 acknowledges this gap, implementation at ground level remains inconsistent, especially in under-resourced areas far from metropolitan centers.

Students today will enter workplaces transformed by artificial intelligence, renewable energy, biotechnology and data science – field that are largely absent from traditional schooling. Studies suggest 85% of future jobs do not yet exist. As a result, educators struggle to provide guidance beyond the conventional options of medicine, engineering or civil services.



Consider a 15-year-old choosing an academic stream not based on strengths or interests, but on family expectations, peer choices or societal prestige. Unsurprisingly, 73% of Indian students report high stress during stream selection, leading to academic underperformance, increased dropout rates, mental health challenges and prolonged engagement in ill-fitting career paths.

Students often memorize content for examinations without understanding how learning connects to real-world problems or professional pathways. Without self-awareness, critical thinking or skill-mapping, they enter higher education and workplaces inadequately prepared.

While affluent urban students have access to private career counsellors and information networks, peers in smaller towns and rural areas – often first-generation learners – must navigate these crucial decisions largely on their own, perpetuating cycles of inequality.

## Evidence used

### Primary Programme Documentation:

1. Career 360 Degree Implementation Report (2023-2024) – Internal school documentation detailing training modules, student assessment data, counselling session records, and outcome tracking (Available upon request: [soniaabraham2407@gmail.com](mailto:soniaabraham2407@gmail.com))
2. Edumilestones Career Counselling Framework – National psychometric assessment platform providing validated tools for aptitude, interest, personality, learning style, and emotional intelligence assessments (<https://www.edumilestones.com>)
3. Teacher Training Workshop Materials – Structured curriculum covering career development theory, assessment interpretation, digital tool usage, and mentoring strategies (Internal documentation)

### Quantitative Impact Evidence:

1. Teacher Professional Development Survey (Pre/Post Implementation) – Baseline (Jan 2023) and endpoint (June 2024) assessment showing:
  - Teacher confidence in career mentoring: 5% → 28% (+23%)
  - Teachers using digital assessment tools: 0% → 22% (+22%)
  - Teachers participating in lifelong learning courses: 1 → 22 teachers
  - Classroom engagement levels: 30% → 42% (+12%)
2. Student Outcome Tracking Data (2023-2024):
  - 38 students made informed stream selections with documented rationale
  - 42 students received personalized multi-year career roadmaps
  - 9 students supported through higher education applications
  - 5 students secured internships/skill-based opportunities
  - 18% reduction in self-reported confusion/stress (pre/post surveys)
3. Community Engagement Records:
  - 64 parents trained through 4 structured workshops
  - 2 neighbouring schools adopted similar models
  - 4 community awareness sessions conducted

### Professional Recognition and Publications:

1. Association of Professional Career Counsellors of India (APCCI) Documentation:
  - Research & Knowledge Team participation records



- 1st Annual Convention panel participation (August 23, 2025): "Challenges, Gaps & Limitations for Career Counselling in India" (<https://www.apcci.in>)
- 2. Published Guidebook: Specialised career guidance manual for law aspirants authored by Dr Sonia Abraham (2024)
- 3. International Career & College Counselling (IC3) Membership Documentation – Global knowledge network participation records (<https://www.ic3online.org>)

#### **Policy and Framework Alignment:**

1. National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) – Government of India policy mandate for career guidance integration in schools (<https://www.education.gov.in/nep>)
2. National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – CBSE framework supporting career education integration
3. CBSE Resource Person Workshop Documentation – Records of CBSE teacher training sessions conducted by Dr Abraham across Bilaspur district, emphasizing career counselling integration

#### **Institutional Recognition:**

1. Delhi Public School Bilaspur Official Records – School board approvals, program implementation documentation, and outcome reports
2. WICCI ESG Council, Chhattisgarh – State-level recognition and leadership role documentation (<https://www.wicci.in>)

#### **Additional Supporting Materials (available upon request):**

- Student assessment sample reports (anonymized)
- Teacher training evaluation feedback
- Parent workshop materials and feedback surveys
- Counselling session templates and case study examples
- Professional learning community meeting records

### **Stakeholder engagement**

Career 360 Degree exemplifies lifelong learning principles for both teachers and students across multiple interconnected dimensions:

**Career-Long Professional Development for Teachers:** The initiative treats teacher learning as continuous rather than episodic. Teachers begin with 40 hours of foundational training, followed by ongoing monthly professional learning communities, quarterly advanced modules on emerging careers and annual recertification in assessment tools. This sustained engagement transforms career guidance from an "add-on task" to an integrated professional identity. Teachers evolve from subject specialists into holistic student development mentors.

**Integration of Multiple Knowledge Domains:** Teacher development combined diverse knowledge systems, including psychological assessment theory (Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Holland's RIASEC), neuroscience of adolescent decision-making, labor market analytics, digital literacy for AI-enabled career tools, counselling ethics and intercultural competencies for diverse student populations. This interdisciplinary approach reflects the complexity of 21st-century career landscapes.

**Diverse Learning Spaces and Platforms:** Teachers learn through formal workshops, digital microlearning modules, collaborative peer exchanges in communities of practice, one-on-one mentoring with certified counsellors, national networks (APCCI Research & Knowledge Team), international platforms (IC3



membership) and experiential learning through direct student counselling. This multi-modal approach accommodates varying learning preferences and schedules.

**Collective and Community-Based Learning:** The Teacher-Led Community of Practice provides a collaborative space for teachers to share case studies, troubleshoot challenges, discuss career trends and build institutional knowledge together. This peer-learning ecosystem reduces professional isolation, builds confidence and creates sustainable support structures beyond individual expertise.

**Holistic Teacher Development:** Professional growth addresses both personal and technical skills. Teachers cultivate empathy, active listening, non-judgmental inquiry, ethical decision-making and cultural sensitivity – essential for effective career mentoring. Teachers also includes managing personal career anxieties and biases to avoid projecting limitations onto students.

**Teacher Agency and Leadership:** The initiative empowers teachers as knowledge creators contributing to national career counselling discourse through APCCI research participation, panel presentations and guidebook authorship. Teachers lead school-level policy development for career guidance integration, advocate for equitable access across socio-economic groups and drive community transformation through parent education, positioning career mentoring as social justice work.

**Student Lifelong Learning Development:** By modeling continuous learning, teachers inspire students to view career development as an ongoing journey rather than a one-time decision. Students develop meta-cognitive skills (self-awareness, self-regulation), critical thinking for evaluating options, adaptability for navigating uncertainty and agency for directing their own learning pathways, competencies essential for lifelong learning and future workforce participation.

### **Process of using evidence in policy development or implementation**

Career 360 Degree employs a comprehensive five-step teacher professional development framework implemented over 18 months (January 2023–June 2024) at Delhi Public School Bilaspur, reaching over 90 students across Grades 8–12.

#### **Step 1: Teacher Orientation and Training (Duration: 3 months):**

Twenty-two teachers participated in structured 40-hour training modules covering career development principles, psychometric assessment interpretation, integration of career-linked pedagogy, digital mentoring tools and long-term student planning strategies. Training was delivered through workshops, microlearning modules and reflective practice discussions, facilitated using the Edumilestones national career counselling framework.

#### **Step 2: Student Assessment and Profiling (Duration: 2 months):**

Ninety students completed validated psychometric assessments measuring aptitude (Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences), interest inventories (Holland's RIASEC model), personality types (Myers-Briggs adaptations), learning styles, emotional intelligence and career motivators. Teachers analyzed reports to identify strengths, interest clusters, academic barriers and aptitude-aligned recommendations.

#### **Step 3: One-on-One Counselling (Duration: 6 months, ongoing):**

Individual 45-minute sessions provided personalized assessment interpretation, stream and subject guidance, emerging career exploration, college selection support and multi-year roadmap development. Sessions averaged three per student over the implementation period.

#### **Step 4: Parental Engagement (Duration: 4 sessions):**



Sixty-four parents attended workshops designed to align expectations with student strengths, promote awareness of emerging careers, support informed decision-making and build trust in scientific assessment methodologies.

#### **Step 5: Teacher-Led Community of Practice (Duration: ongoing):**

Monthly professional learning communities enabled best practice sharing, case study discussions, career trend exploration and collaborative research participation, consistent with UNESCO's emphasis on collective professional growth.

The initiative integrates AI-enabled career databases covering over 550 professions, stream planning tools, national and global higher education pathways and comprehensive career roadmaps, creating a technology-enhanced, evidence-informed career guidance infrastructure.

## **Outcomes and insights**

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### **Results and impact of the evidence-based policy - Capacity and sustainability**

#### **Results and impact**

Career 360 Degree breathes life into lifelong learning principles for both teachers and students, creating effects that extend beyond initial training.

**Teachers as Continuous Learners:** Rather than treating career guidance as a skill acquired once, teachers embrace ongoing learning. After the initial 40-hour training, they engage in monthly learning communities, quarterly sessions on emerging careers, and annual recertification. This strengthens their professional identity: they are not only subject teachers but also mentors supporting students through key transitions.

**Weaving Together Knowledge Worlds:** Teacher development bridges diverse knowledge domains, including psychological assessment theory (Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Holland's career frameworks), adolescent development research, labour market analytics, digital competency for AI-powered tools, counselling ethics, and cultural sensitivity for India's diversity. This interdisciplinary fluency reflects the complexity students will navigate.

**Learning Everywhere:** Teachers learn through formal workshops, digital microlearning modules, peer exchanges in communities of practice, mentoring from certified counsellors, national networks such as APCCI's Research Team, international platforms such as IC3, and through direct student counselling conversations where theory meets practice.

**Learning Together:** The Teacher-Led Community of Practice reduces professional isolation. Teachers bring real dilemmas and collectively explore solutions, building confidence and institutional knowledge beyond any individual's expertise.

**Growing as Whole Persons:** This is not only technical skill-building. Teachers develop empathy, active listening, non-judgmental inquiry, ethical decision-making, and awareness of their own biases, recognizing that personal growth is inseparable from professional development.

**Teachers as Leaders:** Through APCCI research participation, conference panels, and guidebook authorship, teachers contribute to national discourse. They lead school-level policy development, advocate for equity, and support parent engagement, positioning career mentoring as long-term work.



**Inspiring Student Lifelong Learning:** By modeling continuous learning, teachers inspire students to see career development not as a single decision but an evolving journey. Students develop self-awareness, critical evaluation skills, adaptability for uncertainty and agency for directing their own paths.

## Capacity

### Primary Programme Documentation

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#### **Sustainability**

Sustainable career guidance requires embedding counselling infrastructure within school systems rather than relying on external interventions. Teachers need ongoing, practice-based professional development, not one-time training, along with continuous access to updated career information and assessment tools. Technology can enhance scalability, but it cannot replace personalized human mentoring relationships. Parental engagement is essential to align expectations with student aptitudes. Institutionalizing Teacher–Counsellor Cells with clear role definitions helps ensure continuity despite staff turnover. Early intervention (from Grade 8 onwards) enables more thoughtful decision-making, rather than crisis-driven choices in Grades 11–12. Community-of-practice models further sustain teacher learning beyond formal training periods.

#### **Lessons learnt**

India faces a systemic crisis in career guidance, particularly in Tier-2 and Tier-3 regions where structured support systems are largely absent. Research indicates that over 80% of Indian students experience confusion during career decision-making, with 65% reporting mismatched subject-course selections that negatively affect academic performance and employability outcomes.

**Absence of Structured Career Guidance Infrastructure:** Most Indian schools lack systematic career development frameworks. Teachers receive little to no pre-service or in-service training in career counselling, leaving them unprepared to guide students beyond academic instruction. The National Education Policy 2020 recognises this gap, but implementation remains uneven, especially in resource-constrained settings.

**Limited Exposure to Emerging Career Pathways:** Rapid technological transformation and AI-driven



disruption are reshaping labour markets, with many future jobs not yet clearly defined. Educators often struggle to remain current on emerging professions in fields such as artificial intelligence, renewable energy, biotechnology, data science, and sustainable development. As a result, students may remain unaware of viable alternatives beyond traditional pathways such as medicine, engineering, and civil services.

**Student Confusion and Psychosocial Stress:** Students frequently select academic streams based on peer influence, parental expectations, or perceived social prestige rather than aptitude, interests, or strengths. This can contribute to academic underperformance, dropout risks, mental health challenges, and long-term career dissatisfaction. Studies show that 73% of Indian students report high stress during stream selection periods.

**Curriculum-Employability Disconnect:** Learners often struggle to connect classroom learning with real-world applications, labour market needs, or societal challenges. Limited opportunities for self-awareness development, critical thinking, and skill-mapping leave many students insufficiently prepared for higher education transitions and workforce entry.

**Equity and Access Barriers:** Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, rural areas, and first-generation learner communities frequently lack access to career information, mentorship networks, and guidance resources that are more readily available to urban and privileged peers, perpetuating cycles of inequality.

## Additional information

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