

# THE APPROPRIATE TIME FOR THE 9TH GRADE STUDENT'S VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE, THE CASE STUDY OF CHU VAN AN SECONDARY SCHOOL

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## Abstract

Vocational guidance plays an important role in career orientation for secondary students. Before entering the secondary school graduation exam, schools around the country start to organize career counseling. This urgent issue drives parents, teachers, and students up the wall, especially students are the learners who directly suffer from this consequence leading to students' mental health issues. The study aim is to find out the optimal solution that helps students overcome the high pressure of vocational counseling before the graduation exam. In this inquiry, quantitative research is the best method to focus on surveying students' awareness based on comparative research which is typical research, and via this exploration to evaluate the research object comprehensively. The comparative research is applied in this article to discover the differences between vocational guidance before and after the 10th-grade entrance exam towards poorer and lower-scoring students. This study is put into operation at Chu Van An secondary school – in Binh Duong province – academic year 2023-2024 and the students of grade 9 are research objects which are chosen to answer survey questions. According to survey tables, more than 93.3% of students with poorer and lower scores select vocational guidance after the secondary school graduation exam and 6.7% of students take the reverse one. What we need to think about is whether this way of present career counseling is feasible

**Keywords:** entrance exam, secondary school, vocational guidance

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## 1. Introduction

At this current stage, most secondary schools all over the country are under pressure in academic achievement standards and quality assurance. Therefore, the majority of schools orient to poorer and lower-scoring students in vocational training in order not to affect schools' general academic quality. Vocational guidance is “an assistance given to an individual in solving the problems related to occupational choice and progress with due regard for the individual's characteristics and their relation to occupational opportunity.” (The Conference of International Labour Organisation, 1954). Vocational counseling at the right time will help students overcome obstacles in the academic process, especially poorer and lower-scoring students. This research emerged to warn administrators of the negative effects on students of obsessive achievement. Simultaneously, the study contributes to raising people's awareness of real academic results matching their abilities in any respect. Vocational counseling is a means of encouragement that helps students with poorer and lower scoring find the right direction in the future. Through vocational guidance, students will orient the suitable career for their real ability based on their passion, forte, health, and capacity and maybe they can have an

opportunity to get success in the future. Thus, if students do not choose a job that is proper for their ability, the country's future cannot develop sustainably. This is a puzzling question that education administrators need to take into account and think over carefully to both meet society's demands and not impact students' psychology.

## 2. Literature review

Vocational guidance at secondary school is necessary for educators since the final purpose is to help students realize their abilities, strengths, and weaknesses. This issue draws a great deal of society's attention is shown in daily newspapers, and specialized articles, as well as the government policies as follows.

Son Quang Huyen (2018) stated vocational counseling is very easy to fail and not meet the expectations of society, and the success of career counseling depends on the psychology of students, the expectations of parents, the counseling experience of teachers, counseling materials, and government policies. Moreover, education managers lack investment in career counseling, especially students do not have the opportunity to interact with counselors. However, the proportion of students after secondary graduation is relatively high, which has an impact on the labor force's training structure, but a low number of learners after secondary graduation continue to study at vocational training institutes. He predicted that the labor force structure will shift negatively due to a shortage of skilled workers and technicians. As a result, Vietnam cannot achieve its goal of becoming a developed country (Le Viet Khuyen, 2022). Meanwhile, the Resolution of The Party Central Committee argued that general education focus on intellectual, physical development, quality formation, citizen's capability; discovering and training talents, orienting students' careers is the most important duty of education administrators to secure students with secondary level, basic knowledge serving the strong division after a secondary period (Central Steering Committee, 2013). Further more, the Resolution of The Government indicates that: "Division implementation and career direction in high school education" Government (2024). Education Law demonstrates: "Vocational education is a system of measures conducted in educational agencies to help students have an understanding of their occupation; assist them to choose their job based on their desire, preferences that are suitable for the society's demands". (Education Law, 2019).

Although there are a lot of documents regulating vocational counseling at schools, the number of people attending to consult students' careers has not been considered properly. Therefore, the program of vocational guidance conducted at schools is not professional and does not go in the right way as the original contents and purposes (Do Thi Le Hang, 2009).

From my perspective, vocational guidance should be based on students' interests and willingness, not compulsory education. Furthermore, this process should be conducted after the 10th-grade entrance exam for the reason that students have a free choice without pressure. As a result, learners will have decent and suitable jobs in the future with their right preferences.

To sum up, the above articles on vocational counseling have indicated the asynchronism of implementing policies from the government to the local authorities. Moreover, we comprehend that the undertakings of government have not gone into citizens' lives. "The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing" frequently appears in daily life and this makes people feel frustrated and disappointed when processing the practical circumstances.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Research method

Quantitative research is the process of collecting and analyzing by mathematical methods, especially statistical techniques (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2002). The inevitable stages of quantitative research are data collection, data analysis, and results and discussions. Besides, results of quantitative research

that are constructed on data analysis will contribute to the study’s success. This research has optimism and high reliability when data analysis becomes suitable. Quantitative research is the most appropriate approach to survey learners’ perspectives of vocational counseling before or after the 10th-grade entrance exam, and based on a comparative method that is applied in this study towards ninth-grade students with poorer and lower scores at Chu Van An secondary school, Binh Duong province to obtain an overview.

**3.2. Data collection**

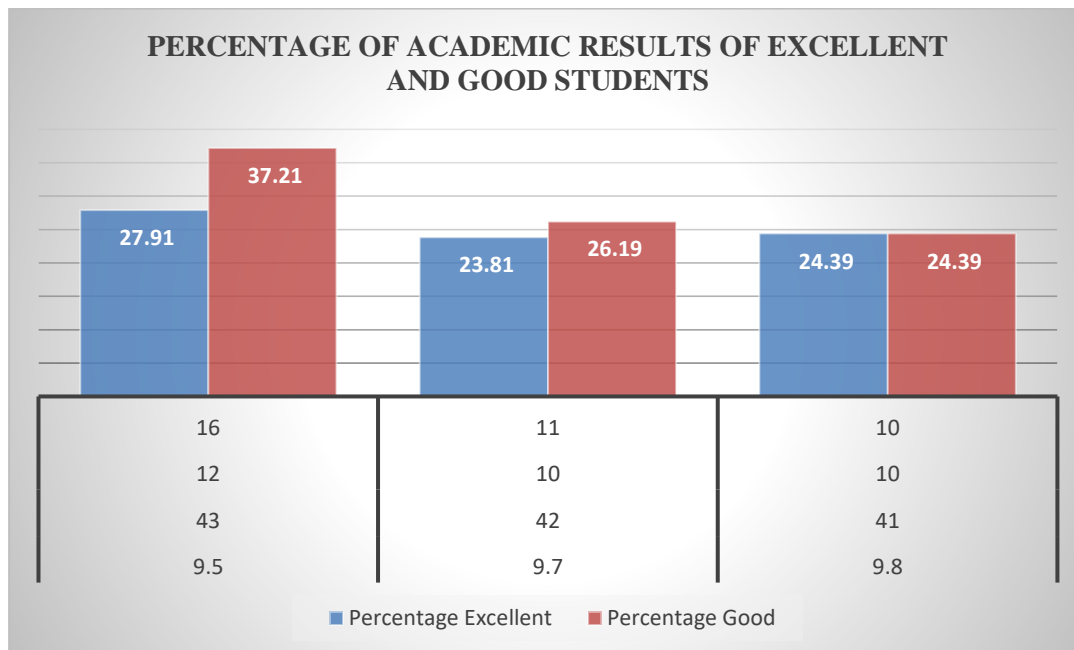
According to the result of the second mid-term tests in academic year 2023-2024 at Chu Van An secondary school, the criteria to put class 9.5, 9.7, and 9.8 into operation because of some distinctive reasons. Firstly, the total number of students in three classes is relatively similar, and it is respectively shown that class 9.8, 9.7, and 9.5 with 41, 42, and 43 students. Secondly, students with health problems extremely focus on class 9.5, 9.7, and 9.8. Finally, learners who get poorer and lower scores are also in three classes. That is the reason why class 9.5, 9.7 and 9.8 are surveyed as stated below.

The data are summarized in the following tables.

*TABLE 1.* Data on academic results of excellent and good students

Class	Quantity	Academic Ability		Percentage	
		Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good
9.5	43	12	16	27.91	37.21
9.7	42	10	11	23.81	26.19
9.8	41	10	10	24.39	24.39

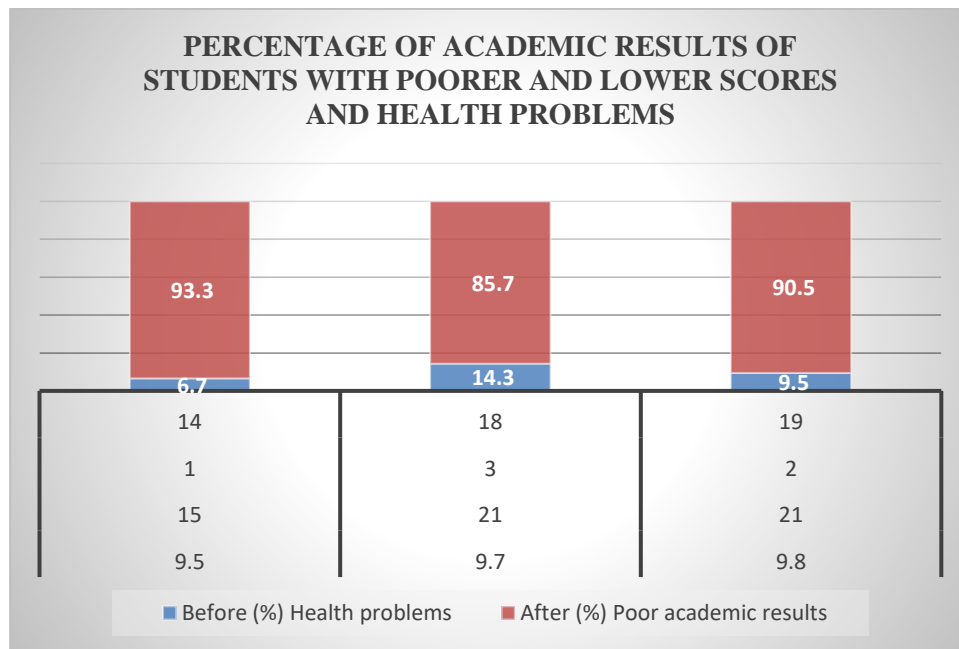
*TABLE 2.* Percentage of academic results of excellent and good students



*TABLE 3.* Data on academic results of students with poorer and lower scores and health problems

Class	Quantity	Situation		Before (%)		After (%)	
		Health problems	Poor academic results	Health problems	Poor academic results	Health problems	Poor academic results
9.5	15	1	14	6.7	93.3		
9.7	21	3	18	14.3	85.7		
9.8	21	2	19	9.5	90.5		

TABLE 4. Percentage of academic results of students with poorer and lower scores and health problems



3.2. Data analysis

3.2.1. Students with excellent and good scores

The bar chart 2 illustrates the percentage of excellent and good students in three classes 9.5, 9.7, and 9.8 in academic year 2023-2024 at Chu Van An secondary school.

In general, students with excellent and good grades in class 9.5 have taken the lead while learners in class 9.8 get the same level.

Learners with excellent and good grades in class 9.8 account for 24.39% whereas 23.81% of outstanding students and 26.19% of good students in class 9.7.

Regarding class 9.5, it has taken the lead at 27.91% of learners with excellent grades and 37.21% learners with good grades respectively.

3.2.2. Students with health problems and poorer and lower scores

The chart 4 gives information about the percentage of students with health problems and poorer and lower scores in three classes including 9.5, 9.7, and 9.8.

Overall, students who have health conditions choose vocational guidance before the 10th-grade entrance exam while poorer and lower-scoring students take the reverse one.

Learners with health troubles in classes 9.5, 9.8, and 9.7 account for 6.7%; 9.5%; 14.3% respectively in selecting vocational counseling before the 10th-grade entrance exam.

In terms of students who get bad results, 85.7% in class 9.7; 90.5% and 93.3% in classes 9.8 and 9.5 choose vocational guidance after the 10th-grade entrance exam.

Through the above data, the author identifies that students with bad academic results are eager to choose vocational training after the 10th-grade entrance exam because of its advantages. They feel satisfied and are full of hope because of the way of vocational guidance at schools. They think they will have an opportunity to prove their assertion and ability.

4. Results and discussions

Health problems and students’ academic outcomes towards poorer and lower-scoring students are clearly shown below.

#### ***4.1. Students with health problems***

There is a wide range of students with intellectual disability at schools. That is why, the method of vocational guidance towards these students will meet countless difficulties. Vocational counseling which is appropriate for students suffering from an intellectual disability is a confusing problem for parents, educational administrators, and society. It is extremely problematic to approach these objects and they cannot make their own decision. From then it leads to troubles in conducting the research. The correct time for these students is to organize vocational guidance before the 10th-grade entrance exam.

Health problem is a problem that affects someone's health (collinsdictionary.com). Students with health problems will face a great deal of difficulties in vocational guidance because they cannot make their own decision and they completely rely on their parents and custodians. According to the data analysis, these students feel annoyed and upset when consultants approach them and this process occurs in a hard situation. Most students strongly react and refuse to listen to mentors' advice. The study shows that 9.5% of students in class 9.8 with health problems respond to counseling; 21% of the remaining including 14.3% of students in class 9.7 encountering an average degree while 6.7% of other student in class 9.5 almost do not express their attitudes as well as their actions.

In summary, students who are in health conditions need to have suitable solutions to adapt to their psychology. That is the reason why accurate vocational guidance is significant for students who are in a mental and physical health matter.

#### ***4.2. Students' academic outcome***

The way of conducting vocational guidance properly towards poorer and lower-scoring students is very essential. Teachers at schools have to know how to consult students about choosing their career and vocational schools in which students want to continue their studies so that students are not under pressure and consultants do not become the people who force students to select the job that they do not want to pursue while students fully have rights to participate in the 10th-grade entrance exam. Choosing to study at vocational schools or continuing to attend the 10th-grade entrance exam is students' and their parents' options. No one can force them to give up their rights unless they can make their own decisions. The ideal time for these students is to hold vocational counseling after the 10th-grade entrance exam.

This research arises during the process of vocational guidance. The form of implementing mistaken vocational counseling causes students', parents', and teachers' frustration. When the exam comes, students have to withstand massive pressure because of fewer admission criteria. Furthermore, students are also very stressed and tired from their friends, parents, and teachers. That is the reason why the correct way of counseling will help students a lot in shaping their thinking of the right path and vocational guidance plays an important role in making the final decision in selecting students' career and future.

This study utilizes the comparative method and via this way of research finds out the variances between vocational counseling before or after the 10th-grade entrance exam towards poorer and lower-scoring students. Consequently, 93.3% of students in class 9.5 choose vocational guidance after the secondary school graduation exam and 6.7% of students take the reverse one.

The academic outcome is the result that reflects students' scores during the study process. Depending on students' abilities, their educational products are different which leads to being very problematic in vocational guidance. The effect of the study demonstrates that 85.7% and 90.5% of students who are in class 9.7 and class 9.8 get low marks agree to conduct vocational counseling after the 10th-grade entrance exam because of its convenience while 14.3% and 9.5% of students who have health difficulties agree to organize in a reverse way in class 9.7 and in class 9.8. Therefore, vocational advice that is put into practice in the factual time will deeply motivate students and create an opportunity for students to try their capabilities. If learners cannot get the target they aim for, they will automatically give up and of course, no complaints happen in this situation.

## 5. Conclusion

Vocational guidance for secondary students is not a simple task and it requires a wide range of factors. In this duty, schools, parents, and students are the main objects. Thus, if one of the above objects does this mission inappropriately, it will affect students' future seriously. Correct guidance will help students realize "Choosing vocational study will take off students' pressure gradually and find out their strengths". The vocational study is also a learning path that is suitable for students' direction and ability. If students choose the right industry that is appropriate for their capacity, and family conditions, students themselves will feel happy with their choice. In contrast, students feel disappointed and depressed after receiving misunderstood information about vocational counseling from schools, students even give up their dreams, they are discouraged from studying and they do not take part in the 10th-grade entrance exam because of their lack of confidence. That is why this research started because of the frustration of students, parents, and teachers and this helps everyone profoundly recognize the problem of this situation.

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