

HOW SERIOUS ARE TEACHER EDUCATORS ABOUT CAREER EDUCATION?

Allen G. Blezek, Coordinator
Career Education

Lincoln Public Schools
Lincoln, Nebraska

Introduction

Drier¹ reported that "there is no greater barrier to career education than the need for appropriately trained instructional and supervisory personnel. Career education cannot be implemented as an educational reform by training a small cadre of specialists. . . It can become reality by beginning a massive program of in-service training for the slightly more than two million teachers in the public schools of the country. It is necessary, simultaneously, to begin a flow of adequately trained teachers from the teacher education institutions of the country."

Many teacher educators have been modifying their programs in order to better prepare teachers in the area of career education and many questions have been asked and are still being asked regarding the overall concept. What are the concepts that make up career education? What would be the best way to implement these concepts? What responsibility are teacher educators really taking in implementing these concepts?

A study recently completed at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has implication to these and other questions. The study was designed to measure the extent to which selected teacher educators are incorporating procedures for planning and conducting career education programs into teacher education curriculums.²

Objectives

While these were five specific objectives included in the study, only objectives one and four are being dealt with here. The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the extent to which teacher education staffs are incorporating career education concepts into the curricula of all of the colleges and universities collectively.
2. To determine the extent to which teacher education staffs are incorporating career education concepts into the undergraduate and graduate curricula of all colleges and universities.
3. To determine the extent to which teacher education staffs are incorporating career education concepts into the elementary, secondary, and post - secondary curricula of all colleges and universities.
4. To determine the extent to which teacher education staffs are incorporating career education concepts into the curricula of all of the colleges and universities according to subject matter area and/or specialty.

5. To determine the extent to which teacher education staffs are incorporating career education concepts into the curricula of all of the colleges and universities according to position title, or rank, of respondent.

Method

One of the first tasks was to identify the concepts believed to make up career education. On the basis of a review of the literature and discussions with teacher educators, a preliminary questionnaire was developed. The preliminary survey instrument was submitted to a jury of graduate students and teacher educators at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and to members of the Nebraska State Department of Education and the Nebraska Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education as well as selected public school teachers for critical examination, and suggested changes were incorporated into a revised instrument. A pilot study was conducted at Northwest Missouri State University, at Maryville, to discover operational weaknesses in the survey instrument. On the basis of these criticisms and suggestions, a final questionnaire was formulated.

The final questionnaire contained 63 career education concepts. Respondents were asked to respond to a three point rating scale regarding their instruction in the identified concepts. The rating scale regarding their instruction in the identified concepts. The rating scale was: "1" = Extensive Instruction, thorough instruction is provided so that students will be able to demonstrate the activity described in the item; "2" = Some Instruction, the student is made aware of the item through discussion, but not required to perform the activity; and "3" = No Instruction, students receive no instruction about this item.

All teacher educators in the State of Nebraska were selected to participate in the study. A total of 384 teacher educators were identified. A final total of 328, or 85.4 percent responded to the survey.

Findings

Across all 63 career education concepts identified in the study, the respondents indicated that they were providing "extensive instruction" in 22.9 percent of the cases, "some instruction" in 30.0 percent of the cases, and "no instruction" in 46.1 percent of the cases. Therefore, it is significant to note that the results indicate that in slightly more than 50 percent of the cases, teacher educators in the State of Nebraska are providing either "extensive instruction" or "some instruction" in the 63 career education concepts identified in the study.

Respondents in only one subject matter area and/or specialty were providing "extensive instruction" in 32 or more, or 50 percent or more, of the 63 concepts. This subject matter area and/or specialty was "Foreign Language Teacher Education, "with 35 concepts receiving "extensive instruction."

"Extensive instruction" was being provided in six subject matter areas and/or specialties, not including "Foreign Language Teacher Education," in ten or more of the 63 concepts as reported by respondents. Those subject matter areas and/or specialties included were:

<u>Subject Matter Area and/or Specialty</u>	<u>Number of Concepts</u>
Agriculture Teacher Education	23
Driver Education Teaching	14
Distributive Education Teaching	14
Trade & Industrial Teacher Education	13
Business Teacher Education	11
Speech Teacher Education	10

Respondents in nineteen of the subject matter areas and/or specialties were offering "some instruction" in 32 or more, or 50 percent or more, of the 63 concepts. In other words the students were made aware of the concept through discussion, but were not required to perform the activity described. These nineteen subject matter areas and/or specialties included:

<u>Subject Matter Area and/or Specialty</u>	<u>Number of Concepts</u>
Industrial Arts Teacher Education	56
Home Economics Teacher Education	50
Guidance and Counseling Education	49
Trade and Industrial Teacher Education	49
Distributive Education Teaching	47
Driver Education Teaching	46
Program or Curriculum Planning	45
Special Education	44
Other	43
Social Studies Teacher Education	41
Agriculture Teacher Education	40
Business Teacher Education	40
Physical Education Teacher Education	39
Elementary Education	38
Foundations of Education	36
Methods of Teaching	36
Supervision of Student Teachers	36
Audio-Visual Media and Materials	35
English Teacher Education	32

Respondents in only three subject matter areas and/or specialties indicated that "no instruction" was being provided in 32 or more, of the 63 concepts. These Three subject matter areas and/or specialties were:

<u>Subject Matter Area and/or Specialty</u>	<u>Number of Concepts</u>
Art Teacher Education	53
Science Teacher Education	37
Mathematics Teacher Education	34

Recommendations

On the basis of the survey and conclusions of the investigation, it is recommended that provisions be made for:

- a. Dissemination of the results of the study to all teacher educators in the State of Nebraska.
- b. In-service education for teacher educators to upgrade their competencies and understandings in planning and conducting teacher education programs which incorporate career education concepts.
- c. Teacher educators to work together within and among institutions and levels (undergraduate and graduate) to properly articulate the teaching of career education concepts in order to prevent duplication of effort.
- d. Teacher educators to determine whether priorities should be established among career education concepts, based upon the assumptions of the study and the data obtained, so that those essential for use at each level (elementary, secondary, and post - secondary), could be taught in the appropriate courses.

Implications For Further Study

This investigation revealed that the following studies may be considered:

1. A study of teachers, who have recently completed pre-service or in-service teacher education programs at one of the state colleges or universities, to determine the extent to which they feel that career education concepts are presently being incorporated into teacher education curriculums. This study might then be compared with the present study to determine the amount of agreement.
2. A study of the students of teachers in public school systems, as identified in item one, to determine the extent to which they feel that their teachers are incorporating career education concepts into the local classroom situation. This study might then be compared with the present study, as well as the study suggested in item one above.
3. A study to determine the extent to which teacher educators are incorporating career education concepts into their teacher education curriculums on a regional or national basis. This study would allow states to compare themselves, and would permit cooperative planning in meeting similar goals.

FOOTNOTES

¹Harry N. Drier, Jr., "In-Service Preparation Key To Career Education Delivery" (paper read at the Sixth Annual National Vocational and Technical Teacher Education Seminar, Columbus, Ohio, October 23-26, 1972).

² Allen G. Blezek. "A Study To Determine The Extent To Which Teacher Educators In Nebraska Are Incorporating Procedures For Planning And Conducting Career Education Programs Into Teacher Education Curriculums" Doctoral Dissertation. Lincoln: The University of Nebraska, 1973.

* * * * *