

LEADS DEVELOPMENT MODEL

MODEL: CAREER GUIDANCE

1. Background

Career selection is an important decision in a student's educational journey, particularly after Class X, when the choice of academic stream influences future education and career opportunities. For many students, especially first-generation learners, making this decision is challenging due to limited exposure to career options, inadequate self-awareness and lack of guidance at home. These challenges are particularly significant in rural and tribal communities, where parents may have limited information about educational pathways and career opportunities.



To address this gap, LEADS, with support from India Literacy Project (ILP), implemented a structured Career Guidance Programme for students of Classes IX–XII in Khunti district. The programme focuses on self-discovery, career exposure, interest assessment, counselling and career planning. In 2025-26 academic session, Career guidance sessions were conducted in 53 of 57 high schools of Khunti district, reaching 7,069 students of Classes IX–X and 2,637 students of Classes XI–XII.

2. Concept

The Career Guidance Model is a **student-centred, school-based and progressive process** that helps students understand themselves, explore career opportunities, identify suitable options and develop an actionable career pathway.

The model has five key components:

1. **Self-Discovery**
2. **Career Exposure**
3. **Identification of Top Three Career Options**
4. **Career Counselling**
5. **Tracking and Feedback**



The ILP approach envisages a comprehensive process supported through regular interactions, allowing students adequate time for self-reflection, career exploration and planning.

Self-Discovery

Students reflect on their strengths, interests, likes and dislikes, aspirations and future goals. Self-review worksheets are used as tools for personal reflection rather than assessment or grading.

Career Exposure

Students are introduced to a wide range of academic, vocational and professional opportunities through the ILP Career Chart, Career Planner and digital resources. These resources provide information on qualifications, career pathways, job roles, skills and educational opportunities.

Holland Code/RIASEC

The model uses the Holland Code framework to help students understand their career interests. The six categories are **Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (RIASEC)**.

Students identify their three strongest interest areas and explore related academic and career possibilities.

Identification of Top Three Career Options

Students are encouraged to identify three possible career choices rather than depending on a single option. They examine the requirements and possible challenges associated with each choice, thereby developing flexibility in career planning.

Counselling and Planning

Teachers/facilitators use information gathered through self-discovery, interest assessment and career exposure to support students in making informed choices. Individual counselling and parent engagement are used where additional guidance is required.



3. Steps of Implementation

Step 1 – School and Teacher Orientation: Engaging school leadership and providing orientation to at least two teachers from each participating school on career guidance tools, processes and student support.

Step 2 – Student Career Awareness: Introducing students to the importance of career planning, education, skills and the range of opportunities available after Classes X and XII.

Step 3 – Self-Discovery: Conducting structured activities enabling students to understand their strengths, interests, aspirations and areas for improvement.

Step 4 – Holland Code/RIASEC Assessment: Conducting the interest assessment, calculating the scores and helping students understand their dominant interest areas and related career possibilities.

Step 5 – Career Exposure: With the help of a Career Chart and Career Planner providing information on academic streams, qualifications, skills, career opportunities, scholarships and educational pathways.

Step 6 – Identify Top Three Options: Helping students identify and shortlist three potential career options based on their interests, abilities and available educational pathways.

Step 7 – Individual Counselling and Parent Engagement: Provide one-to-one guidance and involve parents, particularly when decisions concerning academic streams, higher education or financial considerations arise.

Step 8 – Career Planning: Students prepare an actionable plan covering their preferred career options, required subjects, qualifications, skills, educational pathways and alternative options.



Step 9 – Tracking and Follow-up: Teachers periodically review students' aspirations, career plans, participation and additional guidance needs. The ILP approach also provides mechanisms for tracking session progress and student aspirations.

The Khunti experience shows growing school ownership. Teachers in 40 schools were independently facilitating career discussions and using the ILP Career Chart.

Sustainability

Sustainability is ensured by developing the capacity of school teachers rather than creating dependence on external facilitators. The programme concept specifically envisages trained teachers will continue career guidance sessions with students even after the project support is concluded.

Key sustainability measures include:

- **Teacher ownership:** Training at least two teachers per school to conduct sessions independently.
- **Institutionalisation:** Integrating career guidance into regular school activities and student-support processes.
- **Resource availability:** Retaining Career Charts, Career Planners, self-discovery workbooks and other learning resources in schools.
- **Digital support:** Using the ILP website, mobile application and chatbot to provide continued access to career information.
- **Regular monitoring:** Tracking student aspirations and career plans and reviewing progress periodically.
- **Capacity building:** Providing refresher orientation to teachers and programme staff.



The increasing ownership demonstrated by schools in Khunti provides an important foundation for sustaining the model beyond the project period.

Leads Experience

The experience of LEADS and ILP in Khunti demonstrates that a school-based model can reach large numbers of students while progressively strengthening teacher ownership. In Khunti over 7069 students have been benefitted. With continued capacity building, appropriate resources, parent engagement and integration into regular school processes, the model can become a sustainable mechanism for helping rural and tribal students make informed and realistic decisions about their education and future careers.

Concluding Remarks

The Career Guidance Model provides a structured pathway from **self-awareness to career awareness, exploration, decision-making and career planning**. Its strength lies in combining student reflection, RIASEC-based interest assessment, career information, counselling and follow-up rather than treating career guidance as a one-time information session.



